

*The*  
**ZALOMOV**  
**FAMILY**

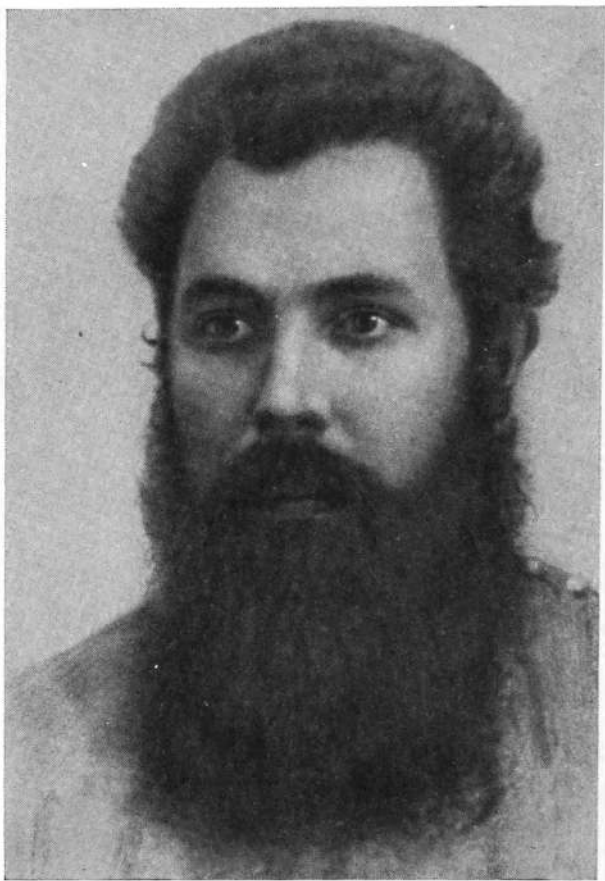












**PYOTR ZALOMOV (1877-1955)**

*The*  
**ZALOMOV**  
**FAMILY**

RECOLLECTIONS  
AND DOCUMENTS

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## IN PLACE OF A FOREWORD

The authors of this book are members of a Russian worker's family—the Zalomov family.

This family became famous a long time ago, when two of its members, Anna Kirillovna Zalomova and her son Pyotr Andreyevich Zalomov, served as the prototypes for the main characters in Maxim Gorky's novel *Mother*. From his own personal knowledge of them Gorky embodied them in Pelagea Nilovna and her son Pavel Vlassov.

The main part of the book contains the "Recollections" of Pyotr Zalomov and materials in the "Appendix" refer to him too.

The story of Pyotr Zalomov is of great value as an independent work. Before us is the history of a class-conscious Russian worker at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one; the story of a passionate search for a full and purposeful life.

In the words of the revolutionary worker, Ivan Vasilyevich Babushkin, it is the history "of his transformation from a mere 'numeral,' a young man with no definite views or convictions, into a socialist."

The "Recollections" do not embrace the whole of Zalomov's life. They are supplemented by the narrative of his youngest sister, and by letters and other materials included in the book.

And so Zalomov's life unfolds before our eyes. We see a Man in the full sense of the word, the type beloved and exalted by Gorky, a man of firm and unshakable convictions, the knight-errant of the socialist revolution, a man hewn, as it were, out of a single block.

In the obituary which Lenin wrote in 1910, in memory of Ivan Vasilyevich Babushkin, he referred to the "*popular heroes of the Russian revolution*." "There are such heroes of the people," he wrote. "These are people like Babushkin, who, not one year or two,

but a whole decade before the revolution, dedicated themselves fully to the struggle for the emancipation of the working class. These are the people who did not waste their energies in fruitless terrorist adventures as individuals, but worked stubbornly and without flinching among the proletarian masses, helping to develop *their* political consciousness, *their* organization, *their* revolutionary initiative. These are the people who led the armed mass struggle against the tsarist autocracy at the moment of crisis, when the revolution broke out, when millions upon millions started to move. . . .

"Without such as these, the Russian people would remain for ever a nation of slaves, a nation of serfs. With such as these the Russian people will win complete freedom from all exploitation."

Pyotr Zalomov belongs exactly to people of that stamp.

The reader will find in the "Appendix" a series of articles from the Leninist *Iskra*, devoted to the First of May demonstration held in Sormovo in 1902, and to the subsequent trial of the workers who took part in it. It will be seen how quickly *Iskra* discerned the natural heroism of Pyotr Zalomov, and how highly it valued Pyotr Zalomov's part in the demonstration.

Maxim Gorky's appraisal of such people as Zalomov was close to that given by the Party. Pavel Vlassov and his modest, heroic mother were typical of the popular heroes of that time, so that their images have a great attraction for us of the succeeding generations.

In addition to portraying Pyotr Zalomov in the image of Pavel Vlassov, Gorky included him under his own name among numerous fictitious characters in the novel *Klim Samgin*. The reader will find him in that book marching in the front ranks of the many-thousand-strong demonstration on the occasion of Nikolai Bauman's funeral in 1905 in Moscow.

One cannot help noticing the long list of prominent names which appear in the "Recollections," and who, in one way or another, had contact with the Zalomovs: V. I. Lenin, Y. M. Sverdlov, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, the Nevzorova sisters, Vaneyev and Silvin of Nizhny Novgorod, and other members of the Leninist "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class."

The names of others who do not appear in the "Recollections" may also be mentioned: L. B. Krasin and others in Petersburg; V. L. Shantser (Marat) and N. E. Bauman in Moscow. Among prominent figures in Russian social and political life, reference is made to the self-taught engineer V. I. Kalashnikov from Nizhny Novgorod, the physician P. F. Lesgaft, and the famous fruit-grower I. V. Michurin—the list might be prolonged.

This simple recital of names is more enlightening than a long dissertation to show how much this ordinary Russian family, the Zalomovs, were actually in the centre of Russian public life, and how historically important and popular was their activity.



We must warn the reader against getting some simplified ideas in certain parts of the "Recollections." It could happen, for instance, that some readers might get a wrong impression from Zalomov's description of the turn in Social-Democratic work in Sormovo, and think that no Social-Democratic work had been done there, and that there was no Party organization there before Zalomov came.

The last one to blame for this misconception would be the author. It is explained rather by the special conditions prevailing in those far-off days, when, by the very nature of conspiratorial work and its special organizational form, not everything by far was known of what was going on, even to the members of the "central ten," i.e., the leadership. This applied particularly to the organization's past history, though often close to them in point of time.

It is indisputable that Zalomov played a leading role in Sormovo, and had a central place in the leadership of the Sormovo *Iskra* underground movement at the beginning of this century. This is vouched for by reliable data in a number of recollections. But the successful turn in Party work in Sormovo, the growth of the Party's influence among the workers (and, in point of fact, the promotion of Zalomov himself to a leading position in the organization) did not happen by accident; they were signs of the maturing of the movement and were consciously prepared for.

Social-Democratic work in Sormovo went on without interruption from the beginning of the 90s; M. A. Silvin, G. M. Krukovsky, I. H. Lalayants, S. I. Mitskevich and other Marxists worked there and organized study circles.

If Zalomov did not mention this it is only because he was writing, not as a historian, but as one who saw and took part in these events. He did not overestimate his own qualities. In "Recollections," he says outright: "There were quite a few comrades in the Sormovo Party organization who were better educated than I, more capable and energetic, and, perhaps, had more natural courage, but my advantage lay in the fact that I had matured politically when I was fifteen and a half years old, and had behind me ten years of revolutionary work."

How exactly Zalomov was different from his comrades, what, in fact, gave him his special place in the organization, is told in two words: experience and maturity. Nor should it be forgotten either that in Sormovo (as in other places) Zalomov never acted on his own; he insisted on his views and fought stubbornly for them, but he carried them out only when they had been recognized as correct, and when every one of his future steps had been approved by the Party organization.

Finally, a few words about another side of Zalomov's work which we cannot pass over. From his "Recollections" we learn about the Nizhny Novgorod and Sormovo revolutionary workers, G. I. Gari-

nov, G. Y. Kozin, D. A. Pavlov and others, on the one hand, and on the other, we meet the Nevzorova sisters, the Piskunovs, O. I. Chachina and other Marxist intellectuals of Nizhny Novgorod.

In the joint activity of the intelligentsia and workers mentioned in the book, the role and significance of the Marxist intellectuals of that time is shown in full relief. We see in action the Marxist thesis on the introduction of socialist consciousness into the workers' movement from outside, from the Marxist intelligentsia, the great force flowing from the unification of the spontaneous workers' movement with scientific socialism.

*N. BIRYUKOV*

*Pyotr Zalomoov*

## RECOLLECTIONS

### I START WORK

Mother haunted their doorsteps, begged, pleaded, wept, but not one shop, not a single office would take me on. It was the same everywhere; I had no one to put in a word for me, and all her tears made no difference. They agreed to give me a job only at one place, as an apprentice fitter in the Kurbatov engineering factory where my father had worked since he was fourteen and until he died.

Mother took me to that same factory which Father had often spoken of as a prison, the curse of his life. His dreams of keeping me away from this hell, of giving me an education, never came to anything. Mother was only too glad that they had accepted me even there, and that I would bring home a wage of twenty kopeks a day.

Instead of rising at seven o'clock in the morning, as I was used to doing, now I had to be up at four, to have time to wash, dress, and walk to the factory before the whistle blew. Work began exactly at five; with breaks for morning and midday meals, the working day dragged out till seven in the evening.

I lived with my grandmother on my mother's side, and her son, my uncle, a shoemaker by the name of Yakov Kirillovich Gavryushov. He worked every day till midnight and after, and slept till seven or eight o'clock in the morning. Grandmother went to bed early and rose early, and kindled the stove, very cross with my uncle for sleeping so late. Muttering the while, she would let the iron stove-door clatter to the floor as if by accident, and noisily thump her stick around the room. Uncle lay

with his eyes closed, pretending to be asleep, but really annoyed with Grandmother for not letting him get enough sleep.

I slept on the floor of Uncle's tiny workshop. Grandmother woke me with a light kick; I jumped up, rolled together my thin felt mattress, blanket and pillow, washed quickly, threw on my clothes and ran off to work.

Grandmother put into my hands a little packet which she had prepared the night before, containing a pinch of tea, a lump of sugar, a piece of black bread—there was more of that, and a piece of white bread—there was less of that. I could hardly keep my eyes open for want of sleep. I was ready to lie down on the roadway, in the dirt, anywhere, if only I could sleep—but I had to hurry to work.

Before this, the long summer day seemed all too short; now time crawled on endlessly. I longed for the start of the morning break, then kept thinking about the dinner-hour, and the end of the shift couldn't come quickly enough. I had only one wish—to rest, to sleep. I gulped my tea warm to save time; I tried to eat my bread during work, so that I could steal ten or fifteen minutes of the morning break for sleep.

When the whistle went for the meal-hour, I sat down on a candle-box by the vices, buried my head in my knees and fell asleep at once. Sometimes I slept on the floor, which was covered with thick layers of dirt, with a birch-log for a pillow.

I was put to work as a helper to a young fitter named Yakov Stepanovich Pyatibratov. At first, my thin and weak arms drove me to despair; they ached so much that tired as I was I found it hard to sleep, and for several nights I scarcely slept at all.

But this soon passed; my muscles grew stronger and the pain disappeared. I got used to the work, cleaning off the rough edges of the nuts with a chisel and then filing them to the right calibre. I learned how best to hit the head of the chisel with a heavy hammer by grasping it at the end of the haft. I didn't get the knack of it straight-

away, and my left hand was often bleeding from misdirected blows. I spread some crumbled chalk over the cuts, bound a dirty, greasy rag round my hand, and kept on working.

From filing nuts I was transferred to copper fittings and steam faucets, and I was often sent from the vices to the fitting-shop as a helper working with a journeyman on pistons.

The employers found it advantageous to replace journeymen by apprentices, who were paid a daily rate of from twenty to forty kopeks, whereas a skilled fitter's wage was nearly a ruble. As a rule, the management raised the apprentices' wages up to fifty kopeks a day, and stopped at that, so that young fitters who had finished their apprenticeship moved to other factories where they received the skilled rate, based on the quality of the work they turned out at the test job given to all new employees.

The work became more and more interesting, and I came to like it, although it exhausted me physically and mentally. Besides having to work day shifts, I had to do three nights overtime each week and work almost every Sunday and other holidays.

It was not long before I felt the effects of this gruelling work; my backbone began noticeably to sag and I developed a hollow chest; bad food was telling on me, as well as the serious illnesses which I had had in childhood. Before I started to work, I could jog-trot easily the whole length of the upper banks of the Volga from the Pechory ravines to the fortress walls, and up the steep slopes of the so-called Otkos, without once pausing for breath.

Now, at seventeen years of age, if I made any quick movements, I found myself gasping for breath—I had even to give up dancing.

I used to envy my childhood friend, Ivan Ryazanov. He had broad shoulders and a deep chest; he was nimble and strong, and apparently tireless. There was no one among us smarter or more cheerful. I thought he would live to be a hundred, but the factory devoured him too. When I came back from Perm in 1899, I learned that he had

passed away at the age of twenty with tuberculosis. To me his death was just a brutal murder.

I was taken from Pyatibratov and sent to work on vices at the other end of the shop. But Pyatibratov, who had first taught me my trade, did not lose touch with me. When he found out that I had attended a district school, he began to ask me questions about what I had read. I mentioned a number of books—Pushkin, Gogol, Lermontov, Dostoyevsky, Nekrasov and others.

"You'll go a long way," he said, and afterwards became even more attentive to me.

Pyatibratov often came up to me and started to talk about things that had nothing to do with the factory, and prompted me with questions. Then he brought up religion. At first, I thought maybe he belonged to some sect and was trying to convert me. We had quite a few Old Believers in the factory, since the manager himself was one. Some of the workers were interested in religion and attended the church debates between the Old Believers and the priests of the Orthodox Church.

However, I was not long in grasping that Pyatibratov belonged neither to the one nor the other religion, that he was an atheist and wanted simply to destroy the belief in God which he presumed I had. I did not tell him that I had given up religion when I was twelve years old; I was pleased that an adult and skilled worker was taking an interest in me.

Pyatibratov then started to explain to me the ideas of Marx and Engels; he said that all wealth is created by the labour of the impoverished workers and peasants, who are exploited by the capitalists, the manufacturers, and the landowners. He told me that there already existed in Russia illegal, secret circles of workers, which aimed at making all workers into conscious socialists, and of uniting them in the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. They proposed to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of armed uprising, expropriate the rich, the factory-owners and the landowners, and build a classless socialist society in which exploitation of man by man

would be abolished, where machinery would do the work and workers would simply direct it.

I was very excited by all this but did not show my feelings to him. And Pyatibratov went on:

"Prison or exile in Eastern Siberia threatens those who take part in an illegal society. Prison awaits anyone found reading or hiding forbidden literature calling on the workers to fight for socialism. And for distributing such books—also prison or exile. We might all end in prison, or on the gallows, or in exile. But remember that we fight for the great cause of all toiling humanity."

Then he was silent and I said nothing. After a minute or two, he asked quietly:

"Will you join our organization?" \*

"But this is a matter of my whole life. I can't decide right now. I need time to think it over."

Pyatibratov did not expect such an answer; he got annoyed, and asked:

"How old are you?"

"Fifteen."

"Well, I'll tell you something. When I was your age I was smarter and didn't take so long to think."

He turned and walked away from my bench, then came back and said to me:

"Only don't tell a soul about it or they'll put me in jail. I'm not afraid of jail but I have to think of my mother."

He went away. I was alone again, zealously filing nuts and measuring their calibre.

Nothing had changed around me. The air was still saturated with fine metallic dust, the place hummed with the rustle of the driving-belts, the grating sound of files, the clang of hammers, the wailing of the circular saw in

\* Y. S. Pyatibratov was a member of the first Marxist circle in Nizhny Novgorod. He took a prominent part in the underground movement in Nizhny Novgorod until he left for Samara in 1895. He was arrested in Samara in 1896 on the demand of Nizhny Novgorod's gendarmes and at the end of 1897 was banished for four years to the Ufa Province under strict police surveillance. He died in 1938, a member of the Communist Party.

the pattern-shop, the whistling of the planes, and the varied noises from the work-benches and gear.

But the walls of the factory seemed to have moved away. I felt as if I were a new man. Life had seemed to me till now to be senseless and unbearable. My muscles had hardened, but I had to give up entirely my favourite occupation of reading, because I did not have enough time as it was for sleep. I thought of the Volga, the fields and the woods, but it had all been taken from me. And the worst of it was there was no one I could blame, nor could I take revenge on anyone. I knew that if I were unemployed I should die of hunger, and therefore at the time I did not yet find fault with the owner, who, as I saw it, had given me work and bread.

Sometimes I thought of committing suicide, but I felt sorry for Mother who was so poorly fitted for life. She was a good midwife and not only helped at confinements, but also did the washing and housework in the sick mothers' homes, and got only a few coppers for it. She bought up old clothes from Tatar junkmen in the Balchug market-place, washed them, ripped them up and sold the cheap children's coats and frocks she made out of them.

Once, when I had a free Sunday, I rose at nine o'clock and went off to visit my sister Yelizaveta Andreyevna Garinova. She lived opposite the "Lady of the Anointed" church, and to get there I had to pass over the Lykovaya Dam alongside the Balchug market. I stopped to rest and looked down below on the crowded market-place.

Suddenly I noticed Mother quite near, about forty feet from the steps. She was just standing there, looking timid, lost and pitiful as she watched a large group of dealers who had completely hemmed in a Tatar man selling old clothes. The dealers tore the things from each other's hands and bargained with the man, cursing each other; two of them were quarrelling over a heavy coat. They were acting like ravenous wolves, and the whole scene only emphasized Mother's helplessness. She decided to go away. I felt terribly sorry for her.



I then understood how much anxiety and endless suffering she must have had to bring me up, and the thought of suicide now struck me as something selfish, cruel and criminal.

All the same, I could not accept the life-long slave's portion which was to be my lot and that of the workers around me. Only my friendship with Pyatibratov helped me to cope with my dismal thoughts, and I gave up for ever the mad idea of suicide. I realized that life could be different, interesting and happy, and that my dreams of doing something heroic might yet come about. Chaotic thoughts rushed through my mind like a whirlwind, but there was now one thing clear to me—the word "I" had changed into the word "we."

I recalled a great-grandfather of mine, a soldier under Tsar Nicholas, a former serf in the Kostroma Province. He had killed his landlord and fled to Moscow, where he volunteered for the army to escape the results of his crime. He was sent to serve in the Caucasus, where for twenty-five years he fought against the Chechens, who were not his enemies. He crossed swords with them in a hundred and thirty-five hand-to-hand battles, was wounded several times, and for this service he was decorated with four St. George Crosses and some medals.

"My great-grandfather was a fool," I thought to myself finally, "we shall cross swords only with the exploiters."

I remembered my father. At the end of his tether from the constant injustices he had to suffer from his foreman Frenzel, one night he threw a bast sack over Frenzel's head and pushed him into the Volga from a steamboat. But no good came of this either to Father or to the workers. Frenzel was pulled out of the river; Father had not been recognized, but the foreman became worse than ever.

"Now," I thought, "we'll throw bast sacks, not over the heads of the Frenzels, but over the heads of the 'bosses' themselves, who breed such grovellers as Frenzel, and they'll never come to the surface."

Thus the whole aim of my life opened up before me. I now looked at everything with new eyes and fresh ideas.

And I said to myself: "These lathes shall be ours; these machines shall be ours; this factory shall be ours." My anger now had a purpose, I knew now that I could hate with justification and a clear conscience, and that, in an organized way, I could carry on the struggle against the evil enemies of the working class.

But I still had much to worry me: Had I the right to join up with the fighters for the cause of the proletariat? Could I withstand torture when the police were demanding that I betray my comrades? I was full of doubts; my too active imagination drew a humiliating picture—I was betraying my comrades under torture. I wanted to tell Pyatibratov that I would join the Marxist organization, only I was afraid that I did not have the right to do so, since I had no faith in myself.

I was young and keen, and immediately set about the task of getting used to enduring pain. I began at the vice-bench, and, as if by accident, I hit myself on the left hand when I was using the hammer and chisel. Once I hit my thumb-nail; the nail turned black and blood came out from under it. But these tests still seemed to be inadequate. In the fitting-shop one day, the fitter and I were fixing a rod to a large piston. I was stooping, and then suddenly, and apparently by chance, I straightened up and banged the top of my head against the iron structure. I fell to the floor, but picked myself up right away. This test proved to me that I was able to stand any kind of pain, and after it I had full confidence in myself and went to Pyatibratov to apply for membership of the illegal organization, and to ask him for forbidden literature.

The first pamphlet he brought me was the *Erfurt Programme*,\* and then others followed. At home, I placed the pamphlets inside ordinary books and read them when my uncle was in his workshop and I was in the room alone. I pretended to be reading novels belonging to Grandmother. There was always a reading-desk by her side, with

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\* The programme of German Social-Democracy, adopted at the Congress in Erfurt in 1891.

a large Gospel-book lying open on it. Women often called on Grandmother, who was a midwife. And when she saw through the window that they were coming, she hid the novel she was reading and took the Gospel. The women respected her as a God-fearing old woman.

"What's this we hear, Alexandra Yakovlevna," one conversation began, "you've got your grandson staying with you?"

"Aye, his mother finds things hard enough as it is. He gets only twenty kopeks a day. I don't sleep all night so that he won't be late for work. I'm sorry for the boy. They will take five kopeks from him if he oversleeps till breakfast time."

And her clients went off, touched with the kindness of the pious Alexandra Yakovlevna. They did not know that each fortnight I gave her every penny I earned, whether for working on day shift, or overtime, or on Sundays.

Grandmother was a skinflint. At supper-time one evening she slipped me some stale crusts instead of bread.

"Come on, Pyotr dear," she said, "eat up. You have good sharp teeth and mine are bad. I hate to throw these bits away."

Uncle got angry with her, and at first began restlessly moving his tea-glass. Finally he could stand it no more; he pushed the crusts impatiently across the table, and then deliberately cut off a large piece of soft white bread for me, three or four times more than Grandmother usually gave me. She pursed up her lips and with her eyes measured the bread which was fast disappearing down my throat.

"Well, why should I worry. Let him eat as much as he likes. I suppose I'll just have to throw out these bits."

"Soak them and give them to the hens," my uncle retorted angrily.

Uncle did not work on Sundays, and usually went down to the grocery stores to play dominoes for money. The stakes were not large, but somehow the gambling seemed to make the game more interesting as the grown-ups became absorbed in it for hours, to my great astonish-

ment. Grandmother always calculated on Uncle being so taken up with the game that he would be late for supper. She would ladle out the soup and say:

"Eat your soup, dear, Yakov will be late I suppose. There's no meat left for supper."

But Uncle usually turned up on time, as he always carried his pocket watch with him; he was no sooner in than the soup, with bits of meat in it, appeared on the table along with rice pudding with raisins and butter. I often felt like laughing at Grandmother's antics, but I did not even smile, so as not to hurt Uncle, whom I loved very much.

Uncle noticed me once hiding a pamphlet in a chink over the door into the room. He let it pass as if he had seen nothing, but took the pamphlet out later and read it. After supper he asked me where I had got it, and did I know that I could be sent to prison or exile for reading such books.

Grandmother was asleep, and we talked for a couple of hours. I told him frankly that I would never put up with always being a beast of burden, and that I had decided to devote myself to the workers' struggle for a better life—to become a revolutionary.

"You've no right to do that. You should be supporting your mother and taking care of your young sisters and brother."

"But is it shameful to be a revolutionary? You yourself admired the revolutionaries, and still do."

"You're still a boy, and you don't know yourself what you want. You'll ruin your whole life."

"What do you mean, a boy? I work days and nights, I work more than a horse, for kopeks—and I never get enough sleep. I hate this life, and curse it just as my father did. But he only grumbled and got drunk; we're going to fight. We'll show them what kind of boys we are."

We talked for a long time, and Uncle was moved by my earnestness. After he had tried all ways to convince me, he said:

"Don't say anything about this to your mother. And let me have the books, I'll hide them myself. If you keep them in that chink, they'll be noticed right away."

Such conversations went on for a long time between us. Uncle went on reading the literature after I had gone to stay with Mother. Afterwards he saved us from arrest on two occasions, when we met the Nevzorova sisters in Anna Mikhailovna Vesovshchikova's flat. He read eagerly all the books I brought to him: *Looking Backward*, by Edwards Bellamy; *Spartaco*, by Raffaello Giovagnoli, and others.

Mother often dropped in to see us on her way from the market. Grandmother usually gave her a cold, disgruntled welcome, yet invited her to a glass of tea. The large samovar hissed away on the table all day long. Uncle loved hot tea, and when Mother came there was always some ready, and willy-nilly, Grandmother had to offer it to her. Mother would put her heavy pack of clothes down on the chest and sit down at the table to drink her tea, but was so tired out that she fell asleep, sometimes with a piece of bread in her mouth. Grandmother would shout angrily at her:

"What's the matter with you, Anna, that you can't keep awake? Maybe you'd like to lie down on the bed and sleep? You're a fine spectacle sitting there with bread in your mouth!"

Mother would look annoyed but would rise and go over to the bed. Grandmother kept on grumbling:

"Why can't you sew the hem of your skirt? It's in rags. And the dirt, it's a shame to look at."

Then Mother would take her shoes off quietly, tuck up the hem of her dirty skirt, and lie down on my bed between the cupboard and the stove. Every time this happened I thought that Mother would start crying and would never come back again. But she loved her mother, and was specially devoted to her younger brother, my uncle Yakov, for whose sake, and in spite of her poverty and a flock of small children, she had given up her right to a seventh part of Grandfather's legacy. For the rest

of her life she could have had a rent-free flat in which to bring up her family since, besides the house of two large rooms which Grandfather had left, there were two outhouses which were rented out. But she had not wanted to distress Grandmother, and had been afraid of hurting her brother's feelings.

Outwardly Mother was like her father, the old unloved husband of my grandmother, who turned all her dislike of him against my mother.

Grandmother came from Balakhna. By the age of eighteen, she had already rejected thirteen enviable suitors who were keen to marry her. She was jolly, clever, and pretty. Her mother, a widow, was sorely vexed with her fastidious daughter, especially when she turned down a marriage offer from a barge-builder, the thirteenth on the list.

"Now, you witch! I'll give you to the first one who comes along, if I have to drag you to the church by the plaits!"

The fourteenth was my grandfather, Kirill Stepanovich Gavryushov, a shoemaker from Nizhny Novgorod. He was a short, thickset man, and already forty-two years old. The young girl put up a desperate resistance to the marriage, but the mother was as good as her word and gave her daughter away to the ugly old shoemaker by force. But the bride soon tamed her loving husband; she was helpful and endearing to him, and he let her out to parties, where she was always welcome as a young, lively, and pretty girl, and an excellent singer and dancer.

Grandmother's favourite son, my uncle Yakov, was tall and well built; he did not resemble my grandfather or grandmother in any respect. He was a very good singer, played the accordion well, and had taught himself to draw. The portraits he drew from memory were better than any photographs; he was so able to bring out in his drawings what was characteristic of a face. In his youth, he had been engaged to the daughter of a steamboat engineer, and was romantically in love with her. Just before

the wedding the captain of the boat asked her to marry him, and the engineer compelled her to do so. She died two years later from tuberculosis—people said she had wasted away with grief. Uncle mourned her all his life, and despite Grandmother's urging he never married, although he was popular with women.

My views on marriage were a bit "old-fashioned" and throughout my life I knew only one woman, a revolutionary, who became my wife. I had no intention of following Uncle's example, but at that time I was greatly interested in how he set about winning people's confidences. As a revolutionary, it was important for me to learn this art, since I knew it was impossible to make a revolutionary out of a man if he had no confidence in you. I could see how Uncle treated women with respect, was always attentive and sympathetic to them, and sincerely interested in all the small things in their lives.

I gave a great deal of thought to this question, and realized finally that a revolutionary must be sincere, honest, and truthful, above all, to himself. He could only teach others what he knew well himself and firmly believed in, and which he could prove by his own actions, by his life, and by death itself. Steadfast faith in victory was, to me, half the battle won.

But together with this, I had also to learn how to conceal the truth from the enemy. I wanted to be sure that I could lie without shame or embarrassment. I had not long to wait for such a test. My experiments in self-control and ability to endure pain were a big help in this respect.

Before the end of the night shift I used to fill the tea-kettle at the boiler to give the tea time to get ready and cool a little. One day there was no one near the boiler but myself, and I decided to pour boiling water over my arm. Not wishing to put myself out of action altogether, I had to protect my hand from the boiling water, and I chose a place above the wrist of my right hand. First I let the boiling water pour from the tap into the tea-kettle, then rolled up my shirt-sleeve, turned the palm of my hand upwards, opened the tap, and let a hissing

stream of water run on to my arm. Blisters as big as hazel-nuts formed.

My mates wanted to know what had happened. I told them a ridiculous story of how the water-tank had just begun to boil, and when I was holding the tea-kettle under the tap, some boiling water had burst out from under the tank lid and scalded my arm. I spoke with the utmost seriousness, without the least hint of a smile, and they believed me completely. They advised me to make a poultice of softened soap and wrap my arm in a cloth soaked in melted grease. I did as they told me.

I had a sore arm for a long time. The burn turned into one large blister and finally burst. It was painful, but I was more amused than sorry. If it had happened as I had said, I should have been burned, not on the arm, but on the hand, because my shirt-sleeve would have given some protection to my arm. I had scalded myself to see if I could endure pain without flinching, and the test had also proved that I could tell lies no worse than others. I thought about the matter for a long time. My mates had accepted my story only because it contained some truth—the burn. If I had told them that I had scalded myself intentionally, they simply would not have believed me. Therefore, I concluded, people who are unaccustomed to seeking the whole truth will believe a lie more quickly than a truth which they don't understand. I thought about the coming encounters with the police and the gendarmes, and prepared myself mentally for them.

My wages were raised to thirty kopeks a day. Somehow my relations with Grandmother began to improve. Whether it was because she had got used to me, or was more content that I was bringing home more money, but she became more friendly and affectionate.

She may have liked me more because I listened carefully to her stories, did her bidding, brought the boiling samovar to the table, chopped the firewood, and so on. She told me stories that one would not expect from a pious old woman. None of the stories had unprintable



words, but their meaning was quite clear. I related these stories to some of the young people in the factory, and they always went down well.

I told two of them to a young fitter named Senchev. He was married to a contractor's daughter, liked to dress in the latest fashion, and sported a bowler hat on Sundays. Senchev was a serious-minded chap. He listened coldly to my first story, and when I had told him the second one, he looked at me contemptuously and, with a sarcastic smile, said: "Is this another of your grandmother's stories?" He walked away without waiting for an answer. I didn't know where to look for shame. Vulgar anecdotes and foul language were the custom in the factory, and this was the first time I had run across a worker who treated me, and my stories, with contempt.

Not long before this happened, Mother found out that I used bad language like everyone else. She read me a long sermon, and yet I had heard her telling two of Grandmother's stories, and her lecture made no impression on me. Now I had met someone who did not use bad language, and who derided me because I was acting as other people did.

Then I understood that by unconsciously imitating life around me, I had come into contradiction with the aims I had set myself: that we must fight not only for the male workers who were being exploited in the factories, but for the rights of women, for a new type of human being. I learned quickly to improve my vocabulary and to avoid foul talk. At no time since then have I found it necessary to look round me first to make sure there were no children or women within hearing when I was talking to someone.

Pyatibratov used to say that if every conscious worker in the course of his lifetime won only two other workers for the revolutionary cause this would be sufficient to enable the working class to be prepared one day for the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

I was beginning to think that the talks with Pyatibratov, as well as the illegal books and pamphlets I had

read, had made me into something like a professor of Marxism. It was enough for me to know that wealth is created from the unpaid labour of workers and my whole world changed. Everything became clear to me: the workers and toiling peasants had to be made conscious of their position in life, win the proletarian dictatorship and build a communist society. A merciless struggle had to be waged against the enemies of socialism. All those who opposed the proletarian revolution because they did not understand it had to be educated as conscious fighters for working-class power. Only those who worked should be masters of the earth.

I tried at once to impart this knowledge to any young workers who seemed to deserve my confidence. Pyatibratov recommended me to pay special attention to a young pattern-maker named Alexander Zamoshnikov, with whom I soon became an inseparable friend.

I gave the young people literature to read, legal books, and then forbidden books. I soon realized that it was not going to be as easy to win them as it had looked at first. They took the legal books willingly, but were frightened of the illegal literature.

Many of the young lads were taken up with petty interests. Boys of sixteen and seventeen frequented brothels, drank vodka, and had love affairs. Some of them thought it was the height of happiness to be a greaser on a steamboat, with the prospect of rising to assistant engineer, and then, perhaps, to engineer. When my time was out as a fitter, the foreman suggested that I should follow this occupation. But I turned it down. There was no one on the steamers I could influence with propaganda, and the propagation of Marxism had become the sole aim of my life.

In the early summer of 1893, I made the final test of my ability to endure pain. The foreman ordered me to make some polished copper plates for the flooring of a ship's hold. The plates had to be drilled for screws. I bored the holes, holding the plates on a board on my knees as I sat on a candle-box. The auger pushed through the drilled

holes about two inches, and, without using pressure, I let it slip into the soft part of my right leg above and to the left of my knee so as not to hurt the bone.

Then I went to the first-aid room to see the medical attendant. I explained that the drill had slipped accidentally from the plate. He probed the wound and said it was about two inches deep. Then he washed it, put on some disinfectant, and bandaged it. It was a trifling wound, but it bothered me for a long time. I limped the whole summer, and had to call on the doctor for fresh bandaging twice a week, but I did not lose a day's work over it.

After this I was convinced at last of my own powers of endurance. Later experiments were conducted on me by the enemies of the revolution.

At the end of the summer of 1893, I went to live with Mother in the Koshelyovka settlement, where she had gone to stay from the Widows' Home. We were crammed into a room measuring sixteen by ten and a half feet. Part of it was taken up with a stove. There were six of us in the "flat," with scarcely room enough to turn round. It was an outhouse which my father had built. My great-grandfather, in settling his affairs, had given his house to his grandson, my father, whom he loved, and had registered it with the Koshelyovka Land Society. But Father did not want to be crowded in with his brothers. During his lifetime, our family moved into a flat because Father was tired of having continual arguments with his brothers. His youngest brother moved into the outhouse. When my two sisters got married, and I started to work, Mother was turned out of the Widows' Home. She had to take legal action against her brother-in-law, and only by a court decision did he vacate the outhouse.

Mother did not know that I had joined the revolutionary organization; I kept putting off the inevitable explanation. I joined the public library where one had only to lay a deposit on borrowed books, and began to read illegal literature, concealing it in the library books.

Little by little I drew young workers into revolutionary

activity. A 26-year-old boiler-maker, Nikolai Kirillovich Afanasyev, worked by my side on the vices. He had had an accident to his eye in the boiler-shop and was transferred to work on bolts. He was poorly educated, but could read and write. At first I gave him light literature, and then more serious works. But it took me two years to get him to read illegal literature with real interest. I had far less trouble with another comrade, Leonid Lebedev. He was a capable young man, and after joining our illegal circle, he persuaded his brother Konstantin to enroll. However, the majority of the young workers who were reading forbidden literature remained outside the organization. Although I did not succeed in recruiting them, I was satisfied at the time that I had won their sympathy to the cause. I knew that everyone could not be a revolutionary Marxist, that this required selflessness and heroism, as well as prolonged training.

At the same time, I was getting more deeply involved in the revolutionary struggle. I became acquainted with Mikhail Gromov and Mikhail Zamoshnikov, who were members of the organization. I got to know the "old men," as the revolutionary youth called members close on forty years of age. Unfortunately these "old men" were a bit too cautious, and inclined to stew in their own juice. We set our hopes chiefly on the young people, those with no family responsibilities.

My friendship with Alexander Zamoshnikov strengthened. I soon found out that he had accepted Marxist ideas earlier than I had done, and, in fact, I was now receiving illegal literature through him.

May Day, 1894, was approaching. Alexander Zamoshnikov told me that a First of May celebration would be held the following Sunday in Sluda, on the banks of the Oka. I waited impatiently for Sunday; I was very anxious to meet the comrades who were fighting for the workers' cause.

We were idle that Sunday, and Zamoshnikov and I went off together to the appointed place.

We walked along familiar roads, past the jail,

through Napolnaya Street, then along the high road to Arzamas, passing the soldiers' barracks where three regiments were stationed. We revelled in the sunshine, the fresh air, and the spaciousness of the fields.

Zamoshnikov told me that one of the intellectuals, Alexander Semyonovich Rozanov,\* would be speaking at the meeting.

The May Day meeting took place on a hill by the banks of the Oka. We assembled in a small clearing, about twenty feet below the level of the road, enclosed by high bushes and invisible from above. A scarlet banner with the slogan: "Long Live the Day of International Solidarity of the Working Class—May 1," had been hoisted over the gathering.

Here I met the Marxist intellectual, Alexander Rozanov, and a number of workers: Lyubimtsev, Belyayevsky and Lukomsky, who were type-setters; a gilder named Yakhontov, a fitter called Alexander Bartsevich, and Grigory Kozin, a boiler-maker. Among the printing workers present there was also a handsome young man with a pale face and a black mole on his cheek. Altogether there were fifteen at the meeting; there were no women. Rozanov outlined the history of May 1. His speech made a very big impression on me. Afterwards we had tea, with white bread and sausage. Then someone brought out a bottle of vodka. The glasses were filled and a song began:

*Let us drink to the fame  
Of our teacher Karl Marx,  
To the wonderful flame  
Which grew out of his sparks!*

I was so inspired by Rozanov's speech that I just could not understand why the comrades were drinking

\* A. S. Rozanov was a student who was expelled from Moscow for revolutionary activity and came to Nizhny Novgorod in January 1894. Until the summer of 1896, he took a very active part in the underground Marxist work in this town. He was arrested in June 1896, and sentenced to four years exile in the Arkhangelsk Province under strict police supervision. Afterwards he gave up revolutionary work.

vodka. I thought it was blasphemous, and that they should have been ashamed to drink on such an occasion. But everyone else took it calmly and I had to reconcile myself to this custom.

I was impressed with the number of people there; I thought it was quite a big attendance, and I marvelled at the variety of trades represented. All this confirmed what Pyatibratov had told me, I could see we were not alone in the fight. I had a mental picture of similar groups of workers of various professions celebrating May Day in all parts of Russia, and I felt greatly uplifted in spirit.

That summer I took seriously ill. It began at work. I felt a sudden chill, and developed a high temperature. I was unable to continue working and asked the foreman's permission to go home. Ordinarily, I reached home in fifteen to twenty minutes, but now it took me an hour. I was completely exhausted when I got into the house and slumped into bed.

After two weeks I returned to work and managed to last out for a week, when I again collapsed and had to be taken home in a horse-cab. It was obviously an attack of recurrent fever. The doctor said I had no hope of recovery. Mother and sisters stood near the bed crying; I heard what the doctor had said, but I was too far gone to care. I became so weak that I lost all desire to live; I wished only for an end to the torturing, agonizing pain in my head. And yet, after two months' illness, I was on my feet again back at work.

I began anew to read illegal literature. Towards autumn, Alexander Zamoshnikov invited me to attend the study circle led by Nina Alexeyevna Rukavishnikova, adding that I must get myself a decent suit of clothes as my usual worker's rig-out would attract the attention of the police. But they were the only clothes I had; after all I earned only thirty kopeks a day, and there were six of us to feed at home. Alexander promised to get me a loan from the intellectuals, and, in fact, brought me twenty-five rubles.

Whether I liked it or not, I had to call on Mother's help, and, of course, had to explain why I wanted a better suit. My confession started a flood of tears and appeals. She said she was tired out and had thought she would be able to rest after all her trouble in raising me. She tried to frighten me with prison and exile to Siberia.

"Let them hang me," I said firmly, "but I won't give up the struggle for the liberation of the working class. It's the only thing that gives me happiness; it's all I live for. And I will always help you as long as I live."

She resigned herself to it, bought a length of cloth, and gave it to a tailor to make into a suit; she pulled out of the trunk a coat which had been bought for her trousseau by her mother and made it over for me. Then came new shoes and a Sunday cap. I repaid the loan gradually.

Mother and I had endless arguments afterwards. If I did not have to work next day, we would lie at night and bandy words from our beds till early dawn, about God, and the government, and tsar. Step by step I broke down Mother's childish beliefs, and explained to her that God had been invented by people, that all evil came from the exploitation of man by man, that the earth was a paradise for the capitalist exploiters and a hell for the toiling workers and peasants.

Mother did not give in straightaway. She marshalled all her relatives against me: my uncle Yakov, my aunt's husband, a school-teacher named Mikhail Ivanovich Pavlov, and my sister's husband, Grigory Ivanovich Garinov.

She did not know that I had begun converting Garinov in the autumn of 1892; he joined the secret Marxist circle in the autumn of 1897 and attended the talks given by the Nevzorova sisters. Uncle Yakov, however, was affected by Mother's tears, and tried to make me give up revolutionary work, but he was put to shame when I pointed out that sympathy and talk about the revolution could not bring it about.

Mother's most persistent ally proved to be the school-

teacher, Pavlov. He kept on trying to talk me round even after Mother had taken a parcel of leaflets to Ivanovo-Voznesensk during the strike there, and he continued to argue with me right up to the time of my arrest.

As a teacher, he had read very much. He was a great admirer of Chernyshevsky and the Decembrists, and could recite Nekrasov's *Russian Women*. He considered that the doctrines of Marx and Engels were correct, but that the time was not ripe for revolutionary struggle, and that I would only bring ruin upon myself without purpose. He argued that we had to wait till capitalism decayed and collapsed of its own accord, as the overripe apple falls from the tree. "We must wait; time will have its own," were his favourite words. I soon gathered that Mikhail Pavlov would never go beyond private discussions.

Mother came over to our side only after a long and stubborn struggle, particularly with herself. I told her that only the very best people had fought and were fighting for the happiness of toiling humanity, that such people did not grudge their lives in the interests of this struggle, that I wanted to be numbered among them, and that I was afraid neither of death nor of torture.

Finally Mother understood me, and now she herself wished to help us in the fight, and after that she did all she could. She began with hiding my illegal literature, keeping a look-out for the gendarme who had started to visit my aunt in her old-clothes shop.

Now when Mother wept, it was not because I had become a revolutionary Marxist, but rather because I had destroyed her belief in God, her faith in the heavenly kingdom, about which she had dreamed so long.

Dressed in my Sunday clothes, I started to attend the lectures at Nina Rukavishnikova's along with Alexander Zamoshnikov. On my first visit I realized immediately how absurd it would have been to have come in my worker's clothes. Nina's room was the home of a cultured woman, and my own living quarters appeared in contrast to be more like a wild beast's lair. Nina read books to us,



setting forth the teachings of Karl Marx, and then explained what she had just read. Occasionally, a student and a seminarist, whose names I did not know, came to the discussions.

The study circle taught me very much about the intelligentsia, a social stratum unknown to me. I could understand why the workers should engage in class struggle, since I was well versed in the life of the "hired slaves." I was struck at once with the distinctive living conditions and general outward appearance of the intellectuals as compared with the workers. I knew that they faced the same dangers as the Marxist workers, but I could not understand what had impelled them to take up revolutionary activity. I thought, mistakenly, that the modern intellectuals stood to lose more than they would gain from the downfall of capitalism; it seemed to me that the building of even the first stage of communism would take much longer and be more complicated and difficult than, in fact, it turned out to be. I gave it at least a couple of generations.

I could understand the teacher Pavlov much better. I thought that he was simply afraid to lose his position in life by the victory of the working class, and that was why he advised me to wait for the automatic collapse of capitalism. He had a salary of thirty rubles a month, a large rent-free flat, with heating and lighting thrown in. His work started at nine a.m. and finished at two p.m. He had summer holidays, Easter and Christmas holidays, and was idle also on Shrovetide and many other holidays during the year. He gave lessons in the summer, charging a ruble an hour, while living in a country-house with all found.

I soon learned that at one time there had been intellectuals who had given up all thought of personal gain and fought in the name of justice for the cause of the working class and the toiling peasantry, but somehow it was hard to believe. There was a fitter named Mukhin among the "old men" in the factory who was in contact with intellectual members of "People's Will." When I had

read *Andrei Kozhukhov* and *The Trial of the Regicides* it became clear that there really had been intellectuals who were ready to die for the workers' cause. I began to look on the selfless courage of the "People's Will" members as an example to all revolutionaries, although I knew they were on a completely wrong path.

I was under the impression that there were no longer any members of "People's Will," but Mukhin convinced me that they still existed. Soon afterwards I met a real, live member of this organization, a young lad named Alexander Karpovich Petrov, who came from Kazan to work in the factory. He started training, and by the winter of 1894, he was working as a semi-skilled fitter. One of the "old men" had evidently told him that I belonged to the Marxist organization, and he came over to my bench very often to get me to enroll in the "People's Will" circle.

It was interesting at first to meet an actual member of "People's Will," but I looked vainly for qualities in him resembling those of Zhelyabov,\* Khalturin,\*\* and Kibalchich.\*\*\* He made no attempt at secrecy, and was, in fact, complacent and garrulous. All this, with his lack of skill when beginning work in the factory, made me wonder for a time whether he might not be a police agent. He argued before everyone the advantages of individual terrorism, and, in passing, sneered at the Social-Democrats.

It was not long before I understood that Petrov was

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\* A. I. Zhelyabov (1850-1881)—revolutionary Narodnik (Populist). One of the leaders of the "People's Will" Party (1879-1881). From 1879 he prepared the attempt on the life of Alexander II, who was assassinated on March 1, 1881. Zhelyabov was hanged on April 3, 1881.

\*\* S. N. Khalturin (1856-1882)—revolutionary; organizer of the "Northern League of Russian Workers" (1878-1881). After the break-up of the League he joined the Narodniks, who drew him into terrorist activity. He was executed in March 1882, for his part in the assassination of the Odessa Military Procurator.

\*\*\* N. I. Kibalchich (1854-1881)—revolutionary Narodnik; member of "People's Will." Executed in 1881 for having participated in the assassination of Tsar Alexander II.

not a police agent, but that he had a childish trust in people, and that, as a revolutionary, he was decidedly inept. He believed sincerely in individual terrorism as a means of emancipating the working class, and was himself ready to put his beliefs into effect.

It was plain that he was much better read than any of us. I tried to show him that the methods advocated by "People's Will" were utopian, but our arguments got us nowhere and he held on to his own opinions. Probably he thought himself smarter and better read than I, and my views did not carry any weight with him.

He sent for two young fellows named Osipov and Konovalov from Kazan, who also got work in our factory. By this time, Mikhail Gromov, Alexander Bartsevich and Mikhail Zamoshnikov were no longer working there. At the beginning of 1895, Yakov Pyatibratov, our main source of strength, left the factory for a job in the Dobrov and Nabgoltz works. Alexander Zamoshnikov and I were left practically on our own to cope with the insistent members of "People's Will." Osipov and Konovalov did not come over to argue with me, but a young fitter, Mikhail Samylin, who had joined their circle, came down very often to see me. Our discussions continued as before round my vice-bench. Petrov came too sometimes and got very heated in the discussions; after one particularly violent argument Petrov threw a block of wood at Alexander Zamoshnikov as he was going out of the pattern-shop.

Samylin was more level-headed, and finally recognized that he had made a mistake in accepting the ideas of "People's Will," and joined the Social-Democrats. I was sorry that Petrov had not taken the same step; he was stronger and more energetic than Samylin, and I liked his fiery temperament, although I knew that he needed long and painstaking education. So he remained in "People's Will" till he was arrested. He had no authority either among the adult workers or among the youth. He was in a false position in the factory. Having come among staunch Marxists, the "old men," and fitters who sym-

pathized with Marxist ideas, he had begun to look on them as the fruits of his own propaganda work, and thought he was moving mountains. Actually, the "old men" laughed up their sleeve at him, but protected him and warned him against police spies. Apart from Samylin, Petrov did not influence a single worker in the factory in favour of "People's Will."

Marxism began to find its way into the factory in the autumn of 1891, when the first Marxist circle was formed. Members of this circle (Pyatibratov, Gromov, and Mukhin) worked in the factory when I first became a Marxist. I also knew the so-called "old men," all Marxists, Fyodor Britov, Vasily Sorokin, Afanasy Kislov, Prokhorov, and Gladkov.

"People's Will" propaganda made no headway in the factory, and the "old men" might have tried to persuade Petrov if they had not been so sceptical about his ability to observe the rules of conspiracy.

Petrov had a habit of reading illegal books aloud right in the fitting-shop, during the meal-break, an action which threatened to wreck the whole Social-Democratic organization in the factory. There were untrustworthy and even treacherous people in this shop, such as, for instance, Fyodorov. He used to say to me that work was a mug's game and that the boss would not give me a gold medal, but he exposed himself as the worst kind of lickspittle when, by some unknown way, he got the job of under-foreman in the machine-shop. He started off on his new career by sacking Poznansky, a highly skilled fitter, merely for having brought boiling water to make his tea and eating bread before the whistle went, although he did not stop working.

Our company often spent a night out at the theatre. Day shift ended at 7 p.m. and the curtain went up at 7.30 p.m. We washed somehow; there was no time to go home to change. Even then we had to hurry as we had a good mile to go.

There was a separate box-office, almost at the top of the building, for tickets to the balcony and gallery, the

only parts of the theatre we could afford. The ticket-seller was a technical school student who fleeced us regularly. The tickets, plus charity tax, cost twenty-two kopeks each, but the ticket-seller sometimes said that these were sold out and there were only "extra" ones left, and these were thirty-two kopeks each. It was galling having to pay the additional ten kopeks as we had few to spare, but we did not want to leave and reluctantly paid the increased price. Later I found out that the student was a member of "People's Will." Mr. "Revolutionary" probably had no idea how much labour it had cost us to get those "extra" ten-kopek bits which he so light-heartedly slipped into his own pocket.

One evening, eight of us arrived at the theatre; Petrov was with us. The tickets were "sold out"; there were only "extra" ones, and we had just enough between us for the ordinary tickets. Petrov collected all our money, went over to the box-office and asked for eight tickets. The student said that the ordinary tickets were sold out, but that he had "extra" ones at thirty-two kopeks. Petrov agreed to take them, and when he had been handed the tickets he paid the price shown on the tickets and the placards, i.e., twenty-two kopeks each. The ticket-seller's face was a picture of "royal indignation," but he thought better of calling the manager. We were let into the hall and we took our seats feeling all the better for having had our own back on a petty swindler.

I continued to study the workers and their life, particularly the life of the youth, realizing more and more clearly that the fight to raise their political consciousness was going to be very long and difficult. My thoughts turned involuntarily to the intellectuals. I felt that only they could speed up and strengthen this fight.

The more I learned about life the clearer it became that my knowledge was still very inadequate. I did not think of myself any more as a professor of Marxism, or that I could get on well enough without such institutions as the Moscow University, and I dreamed about meeting intellectuals who could live with only the workers' interests

at heart. I heard the names of revolutionary intellectuals: Krukovsky, Silvin, Vaneyev, Grigoryev,\* Skvortsov, Kuznetsov, and Rozanov, whom I had met personally. Though I was more educated than many of my comrades it was very hard for me to understand the intellectuals' language. I had still a great deal to learn before I could understand them.

The third spring since I started to work in the factory was approaching, but I was still counted a "boy," although I had begun to grow a beard and was doing a skilled fitter's work. The management referred to me mockingly as "the boy with the beard," but they declined to make the "boy" into a journeyman—they were strict on economy.

One Saturday they brought in a broken twelve-inch shaft from a steamboat. A blacksmith and three hammermen welded it during the night and on Sunday a turner was put to work on a machine to grind it. After it had been turned on the lathe, I cut out a socket in it 500 millimetres long, cut the sharpened end through the narrow slit, and received forty kopeks for my work. The turner and blacksmith were each paid one ruble twenty kopeks, and the three hammermen together got one and a half rubles. The estimate for the daily work of the machine was twenty-five rubles. So the management had

\* M. A. Silvin and A. A. Vaneyev, from Nizhny Novgorod, joined the revolutionary movement straight from school. In 1893, they went to study in Petersburg, and there enrolled in Lenin's "League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class." They were arrested in 1895 at the same time as Lenin and sent to Eastern Siberia where Vaneyev died of tuberculosis. After the 1917 Revolution, M. A. Silvin worked in the People's Commissariat of Education and also as a lecturer.

Mikhail Grigoryevich Grigoryev came to Nizhny Novgorod from Kazan in the autumn of 1889. He had been banished from there for participating in Fedoseyev's Marxist study circle. He met Lenin twice in Nizhny Novgorod in the years 1893 and 1894, and organized the first workers' Marxist circle there, which included Y. S. Pyatibratov, P. A. Zalomov's teacher. Grigoryev's work in the Nizhny Novgorod Social-Democratic organization was interrupted by the police who exiled him to Samara in the spring of 1894.

an outlay of twenty-nine rubles thirty kopeks, and put in a bill for 180 rubles. If I had not been there they would have had to give the job to a journeyman with a wage of a ruble twenty kopeks, but the management did not scorn the eighty kopeks they had made out of me. This case was very illustrative and I used it in my propaganda.

Soon afterwards an event occurred which the workers remembered for a long time. Alexander Zamoshnikov received a parcel of leaflets calling on the workers to fight against exploitation. We decided to distribute them along the Kazan banks, as many workers passed that way from where they lived on the outskirts of Nizhny Novgorod, and on the lower main road where there was a regular flow of workers from Koshelyovka, Pechory, and the factory settlement. We arranged to put out the leaflets just before dawn.

It was a dark, cloudy night. Zamoshnikov took the banks and I took the road. I threw the leaflets along both sides of the road. About a quarter of the way along I stuck one of the leaflets on to a pile of logs by the roadside. Suddenly I heard voices and saw two people coming towards me: it was the police.

My first impulse was to turn back and pull the leaflet off the logs, but that would have attracted their attention immediately. Instead I went on towards them, and when I was about ten paces from them I stopped by another woodpile as if necessity called. I did the right thing; the police kept their eyes on me and went on past without seeing the leaflet. I laid the remaining leaflets along the road right up to the factory gate, and then made for home as the skies were beginning to turn grey.

I could not sleep, and calmed down only in the morning when I knew that the leaflets were in the right hands. Zamoshnikov had also carried through his task.

Old Luka Lebedev, our comrade Leonid's father, brought a leaflet he had picked up into the fitting-shop and read it aloud. The management got to hear about it and the heavens fell on the unfortunate old man. He was thoroughly cross-examined by the gendarmes.

Luka wore spectacles; he had a bluish nose which looked like a plum, and he was fond of a drink. The gendarmes were smarter than they looked and let the old man go. But he was angry for a long time afterwards and used to shake his fist at the young people and shout:

"You and your damned politics, you should all swing!"

Luka was not the only one who held this opinion.

But when, in 1897, the law on the limitation of the working day came into force, and the Kurbatov workers went on to a ten-and-a-half-hour day, everyone remembered the leaflets, on which a blue swallow had been imprinted. They said:

"The birdie did it!"

The leaflets had made a lasting impression and were the talk of the place for a long time. For several days afterwards, I went about feeling on top of the world for the successful leaflet distribution, and a little proud of myself for having fooled the police.

### ZOYECHKA

One Sunday morning when I was off work I got up at ten o'clock. Mother was sorting out her pack of old clothes. Her worn-out spectacles, which she had repaired with a piece of tape, had slid down her nose. As she peered at me over the top of her glasses, I saw a slight, quizzical grin on her face. I sensed that she wanted to tell me something important, and became wary. Throwing me a sly, searching look, she said:

"I was over at the Widows' Home buying some old clothes from widows I know there. I called in at Stebleva's. You'll likely remember her daughter, Zoyechka, she brought you books when you were in hospital. That's an old skirt of hers, and six pairs of stockings, and some blouses. She's a very pretty girl now; her plaits are as thick as her arm and she has such rosy cheeks and white skin—she's just like a snow-maiden.

"I had tea with them. Zoyechka looked so nice in her muslin dress; she was just like an angel. She sat leaning



her pretty elbows on the table and smiled all the time. There was a handsome student sitting opposite her in his uniform.

"The widow told me that Zoyechka had a child by the student, and that the baby is now in a foundling hospital in Moscow. She was almost expelled from the Gymnasium, but got a doctor's certificate that she had been ill; now the widows say she is pregnant again. And her young sister has a baby by the janitor's son, and it's in the foundling hospital too. She couldn't cover it up, so they expelled her from the Gymnasium."

Mother's story made my heart ache. She evidently had some suspicions about my feelings towards Zoyechka, and wanted to test them. But her inquisitive looks got her nowhere. I asked a few questions and made some desultory remarks.

But at night, when I lay on the floor under the one blanket with my brother, it was all I could do to keep from rising and kissing the worn stockings which had belonged to Zoyechka. Did I remember her? I remembered her all right.

I was twelve years old when I was in love with Zoyechka, and she was just a child. I thought that my childhood love was dead but now I had to confess to myself that it had grown and continued to grow with me. The past was neither dead nor forgotten. I simply had to see her again, to know what she was like now. The Widows' Home became a magnet pulling at me.

I decided to join the many thousands who would be taking part in the Oran Festival procession greeting the icon of the Mother of God. It was being held on Easter Sunday.

I had a good breakfast, wrapped up some bread, and went off to the other side of the town. The weather was warm and dry, and groups of people had gathered from all parts of the town. Even non-religious people had come to see the icon out of curiosity; indeed, many of them were atheists. For the young folk, the festival was an opportunity to meet old friends or to pick up new ones.

I loitered at the fence outside the Widows' Home, hoping to meet Zoyechka coming out—my Zoyechka, as I was now referring to her in my thoughts, although I did not, and could not, have the least justification for such a liberty. Soon she came out together with a tall nurse.

With a hurried glance at them, I went on quickly past to reach the crowd waiting to see the procession.

I had recognized Zoyechka, though she had become a fully grown woman. She looked very lovely in her white dress. Her companion carried Zoyechka's coat over her arm. Zoyechka's taut fair plaits had grown heavier and longer; her grey eyes were alight and were bigger and brighter. She still had the tiny tilt to her nose, and the scarcely visible spots left by the small-pox.

She was not as beautiful as Mother had described her, but it was still difficult to walk away from her.

The icon was now quite near. Women lay in the dust of the road to let the icon pass above them. The monks and priests were chanting the service. Zoyechka moved closer to the icon, knelt in the dust and bowed her head to the ground. I stood only a few steps behind her. She noticed me standing there. It was painful to watch her humiliation, although I knew she did not want to be looked at.

The service was over. The white dress was now soiled with dust. Zoyechka took her coat from her companion and put it on. The change was striking. The dress, which had appeared radiant in the sunshine, vanished from sight, the comely form disappeared, and before me I saw an ordinary girl, just one of thousands.

She strolled off with the nurse, walking about ten yards in front of me and looking straight ahead. We remained that way till we reached the gate of the Widows' Home. Zoyechka's companion turned to the left, and she herself went to the right. I caught up with her at the porch. We went through the double door. Then she turned, threw a horror-struck look at me, and ran quickly up the stairs, passing the first floor where she lived.

I was confused and dismayed. I called on a friend on

the first floor, and then climbed to the third floor to see Korovin, an old schoolmate, chatted with him for a while, and went home.

Mother had also been in the Widows' Home. When I came in, she asked:

"Pyotr, were you in the Widows' Home today?"

"Yes, why do you ask?"

"I was told by one of the widows that Stebleva's daughter had come running to her all in tears because some drunken muzhik had followed her into the house."

"And what has a drunken muzhik got to do with me? You know I don't drink."

A week later, I was in the new theatre, sitting in the back row of the gallery. The seat on my left was vacant. Just before the curtain went up, Zoyechka Stebleva, in her white muslin dress and smelling of perfume, sidled her way in and sat down beside me. I held myself as far away from her as I could so as not to soil her dress with my worker's clothes. I did not look at her; I just sat there delighted at the lucky meeting.

During the interval she went out and did not return. I saw her down below in the pit. She was pointing in my direction and saying something to her friend, the student ticket-seller who had a weakness for "extra" kopeks. The student looked up and glared at me like a ham actor, moving his head up and down for all the world like a horse being hit on the snout.

From where I sat they both looked very handsome. But for me, the muslin dress, and Zoyechka, and the baby who had been sent to "where angels are made," and the "extra" kopeks, and the "People's Will" student, at that moment merged into one abomination.

Nevertheless my love did not die. It remained with me for the rest of my life, as probably all childhood loves do, a bright sunny page of my youth.

But I knew then that a glittering angel, prostrated in servility before the Lord, was no wife for me. I needed one who would share my thoughts and be a courageous and good comrade to me.

## FRIENDS AND FOES

It was the end of April 1895. We were waiting for May Day, which we intended to celebrate on the first Sunday in May.

The meeting took place in the Mokhoviye Hills at the edge of a wood on the bank of the Volga. Nearly sixty people assembled, most of them workers. There were intellectuals present, but their names were not given, and I did not remember having seen any of them before, although I was specially interested in them. The word went round that some of the intellectuals were members of "People's Will," but I could not make out the difference from their speeches.

We acted as if we were in a free country: we lighted fires, boiled tea, made speeches, and without the least embarrassment sang our revolutionary songs. I was now fairly hardened to this kind of thing and so nothing there surprised me. The celebration raised our spirits immensely, and for a long time afterwards I recalled the red flag that had fluttered so bravely over our May Day celebration.

With the coming of autumn, 1895, our Social-Democratic study circle started a new session. The members of the circle were: Nikolai Afanasyev, Leonid Lebedev, Grigory Kozin, Alexander Zamoshnikov, and I. The tutor was a student named Maryshev, a hairdresser's son.

Nikolai Afanasyev had his own room where we sometimes met; it had a separate door off the main entrance. His parents did not trouble us. Only once, when the class was hard at work, the door opened from the neighbouring room and in came Afanasyev's father, a boiler-maker.

The sudden change in his son's life must have worried the old man. He was dark-featured and one-eyed, like his son. He looked round at us with his one eye, churlishly, distrustfully, not even passing the time of day. He walked over to Maryshev and noticed an exercise book which contained a hand-written copy of *The Communist Manifesto* lying on the table.

"What kind of book is that, eh? Let me have a look."

"It's *The Life of Saint George the Triumphant*," answered Maryshev readily, handing the book to the old man who he knew was illiterate. Afanasyev held the exercise book upside down at arm's length and gazed at it long and silently. Then he put it on the table and walked out of the room. After that he never looked into his son's room again while we were there.

Maryshev's inexperience led him to adopt a most unfortunate method of study. Bending low over the exercise book, which he kept lying flat on the table, he read out the text in a monotonous voice, paying not the slightest attention to us.

We had to work every day and do three nights' obligatory overtime every week, as well as work practically every Sunday, so we were always on the edge of sleep. I could hardly keep my eyes open and took in words only here and there. The other comrades were just as hopelessly drowsy; they fought their relentless desire for sleep, roused themselves, listened for a while, and again fell into a stupor.

Once I had a free Sunday, on the eve of which we had a study circle. I asked Maryshev to lend me the exercise book so that I could read it at home. After a good night's sleep, I read *The Communist Manifesto* the whole day, and learned more from it that day than in all the classes with Maryshev.

Our family had moved to another house. The old house, which my great-grandfather had built, was collapsing; more than half of it was already rotted. It had become impossible to live in, and my uncle's widow, Aunt Marya, left it and went to live in a flat.

Although the house belonged by right to my father, his brothers and their families had occupied it, and to avoid any likely misunderstandings, I suggested that it be sold to a firewood dealer and that the money obtained for it be divided equally among my uncles' families. Mother flatly refused to take my advice, saying that the

house had belonged to Father, and she couldn't bear to have the outhouse, which he had built himself, pulled down. I explained to her that Aunt Marya was friendly with a gendarme and kept an eye on me, and if we took over what remained of the old house, the gendarme would certainly help Aunt Marya to get the outhouse, and I would be forced to leave home. Mother paid no attention. She bought a framework of fine fir-log tops, borrowed money from her relatives, hired carpenters, and had them build a more spacious dwelling.

And it happened just as I had said; the gendarme filed applications for Aunt Marya both to the Zemstvo chief and the rural district court. The court decided in favour of Aunt Marya, giving her the right to the old house, and as Mother was held responsible for it being broken up, the court ordered that Aunt Marya be given the outhouse. So she, with her daughter and two sons, took up residence in our old home.

Our new house was twenty-one feet long and sixteen feet wide; it was so roomy that we could have held a dance in it. We had now plenty of space; my brother and I no longer slept on the floor, and my sister was able to take orders for stitching and sewing quilts. She worked whole days at a time to earn money for her trousseau, never going to bed before midnight. Mother also sewed and reseeded, making up children's coats and frocks out of all kinds of old clothes.

She had now given up trying to persuade me from revolutionary work; there were no more tears; in fact, she herself started to hide illegal literature. Once, she received a parcel of leaflets, wrapped in bast matting, from Ivan Pavlovich Ladyzhnikov and carried it to Ivanovo-Voznesensk during a strike there.

My younger brother Alexander got a job in the Kurbatov factory as an apprentice pattern-maker. One of the younger sisters went off to learn dressmaking. Now there were five of us at home and we lived together peacefully and quietly.

The gendarme called in often at Aunt Marya's, slip-

ping her money to pry into my affairs and report to him. She was a stupid, crotchety woman who traded in old clothes which she bought from Tatars. She herself could not sew, and she envied Mother, who, by remaking old clothes, earned more than she could, besides what she brought in from her services as a midwife.

Aunt Marya quarrelled with everyone, with her daughter, her sons, her son-in-law, as well as the neighbours. Sometimes she would start screaming so loud she could be heard in the street, threatening to send all Mother's sons and daughters "along Vladimir Road to count the telegraph poles," i.e., to hard labour.

I could not hold meetings at home, nor was I able to invite comrades to visit me without having it reported immediately to the gendarme. However, this had its good side: it made me take more care even at home.

I could have reached Afanasyev's flat in five minutes by going straight there, but I always left home in the opposite direction and made a detour to the study circle, and did the same on the way back. The gendarme, therefore, was never able to catch us.

Once, when I was going home from work with Alexander Zamoshnikov—we always walked home together since we were close friends—he told me that Maryshev would not be leading the study circle any more and that his place would be taken by another student called Alexander Afrikanovich Kuznetsov, the son of a wealthy trader.

Zamoshnikov lived not far from the factory, and when I was left alone, I went along thinking about the student Kuznetsov. I was astonished to know that he was a rich merchant's son, and just as startled at his unusual patronymic. I knew more about the great continent of Africa than I did about Christian names, and I had never heard of anyone being called Afrikan.

Maryshev was a hairdresser's son, and I looked on hairdressers as artisans, and it was understandable why a hairdresser's son should take the workers' side. But that the son of Afrikan, a rich merchant, should be

against the factory-owners was a great deal harder to understand. The words of the revolutionary song which we loved to sing came back to me:

*The merchants, the kulaks, the rich men,  
All the evil vampires of the tsar,  
We'll smash them, we'll slash them.  
The new life beckons from afar.*

I took the words of the song literally, and each time we sang it I was filled with rage, and imagined how we would smash the kulaks, the merchants, the landlords, the capitalists, and the tsar. And now here was the son of a rich merchant who, moreover, bore the name of Afrikan. The name reminded me somehow of a special category of great wealth, like the name Croesus, the King of Lydia. And I thought: if Afrikan the son is with us, he must destroy Afrikan the father.

This was the only way I saw it, and the student Kuznetsov appeared to me to be an unusual, almost unnatural, personality. I waited with great interest for my first meeting with him.

Kuznetsov did turn out to be a really interesting individual. He was just that type of intellectual of whom I had dreamed: an intellectual who could speak the workers' language. It seemed to me that I had not yet met such unobtrusive simplicity and deep sincerity in any other intellectual.

At our very first meeting with him we felt as if we had known him for years—he showed himself to be close to us, to be one of our own.

"The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the workers themselves," he announced, and these words were the pivot of all our subsequent work with him.

I understood at once that he had not come simply to study with us, but to work, and to inject us with part of his own personality.

We were still as exhausted with working Sundays and overtime, and tormented with the lack of sleep, but



every time we had talks with him we felt such an inner uplift that all our drowsiness disappeared, and this, by itself, was something unusual, and to us seemed unnatural.

I did not envy Kuznetsov, but I wanted passionately to be as able as he to freely and strongly influence and direct the thinking of the working-class revolutionaries. I was still angry with myself for my stupidity, my limitations and ignorance, which had prevented me from winning the ideological discussions with Alexander Petrov. Kuznetsov's talks sharpened our thoughts, and left deep, unforgettable tracks in our understanding.

The winter was drawing to a close and the factory was up to the eyes in work. But as the owner saw no advantage in extending the factory, as it would have involved him in considerable expense, he preferred to make the workers work Sundays and overtime by holding the threat of dismissal over them. The technicians, foremen, and under-foremen rushed up and down the shops like slave-drivers.

I was sent to smooth off cranks for a locomotive which was being made for the 1896 All-Russian Exhibition in Nizhny Novgorod. My work-place was near the door, which was hardly ever shut because of the traffic. It was cold there, but the work was hot, and I wore only an undervest with the sleeves rolled up. The foreman kept coming at me for no reason at all, shouting: "Come on, quicker, quicker."

He was an Old Believer, with a long grey beard, the ends of which he always pulled at when he was annoyed. I worked right out in the passage between the lathes, and the foreman scarcely ever passed me without saying something. In spite of the cold, I was dripping with sweat, but he barked away: "Come on, quicker, quicker."

I got fed up to the teeth with it, threw down my tools, and sat down on a box. He noticed from farther up the shop that I had stopped working, and came pouncing on me like a hawk. About ten paces away, he started pulling his beard and shouted:

"What are you sitting there for? Come on, start working, quick."

He came nearer to me; I sat and laughed at him. That made him really mad. Holding on to his beard and shaking his head, he roared as if I were a mile away:

"What are you laughing at? I'll sack you, honest to God, I will. I swear to God I'll sack you."

I stood up and started shouting back at him:

"You're well wrapped up, you're running up and down the shop and you're still cold. And I've only got a vest on, and it's wet through with sweat. I get forty kopeks a day for working so that in the cold winter the sweat's running out of me like water. How can I work any harder than I'm doing?"

He did not expect such boldness and became confused; after muttering something inarticulately, he went away clutching his beard. From then on he stopped shouting at me. He was not a bad fellow by nature, a fitter himself once, then an engineman on a steamboat. He did not complain to the technician about me, and when he was giving me the second crank to work on, he said in a conciliatory tone: "The technician is in a hurry. The engine has to be finished for the Exhibition. When you're finished here, I'll put you back on a lighter job upstairs, on the copper cocks. Now, try a little more quickly."

I did not need coaxing. I was proud that our engine was going to the Exhibition and I was pleased to see the cranks which had come through my hands shining like silver.

May 1896 was approaching. Because the police spies were especially active, our May Day meeting was postponed. May 3 happened to be my birthday. I decided to hold a birthday party at my house to mark the occasion, and at the same time to mislead the police and the gendarme who were taking such a great interest in my affairs. To make it look more convincing, I sunk my principles and bought some bottles of wine and a little vodka for the boys and girls who were to be my guests.

From among the lads, I invited only my own friends, Mikhail and Alexander Zamoshnikov, Afanasyev, and

Leonid Lebedev. The local chaps were sore at me and declared that none of the girls would come to my party. They were furious when they heard that the prettiest, the most proud and usually unapproachable girls came along, having spurned the local tempters. A young pattern-maker, Larka, was especially vexed; he did not have enough fingers on his hands to count the number of girls he had seduced. The deceived girls either risked their lives by having abortions or threw themselves away in marriage to some worthless fellows or to old men. Larka subsequently married a Kanavino prostitute with a large dowry.

The party was a lively one. The dancing interchanged with kissing games. The uninvited lads and girls gaped venomously through the windows. Window-gazing was the usual thing then, but the limits were soon overreached, when the onlookers began to knock on the panes and shout rude remarks. I got riled and went out to them.

"Who's knocking at the window?" I shouted. "Maybe somebody needs the midwife urgently? I'll tell Mother. She'll be out in a minute."

Nobody spoke, but the hooliganism ceased. A nice-looking young neighbour, a girl with lovely grey eyes, looked hurt and left the party. I did not understand why she, particularly, should feel insulted, but I learned later that she was with child by Larka and was going to wed an old man.

A half-hour passed; the dancing was in full swing; the accordion-player was showing his skill. There was just enough vodka and wine to keep the party merry without anyone getting drunk. Everyone was lively and cheerful, dancing the polka. I couldn't dance, because of my weak heart, but I was looking on with great enjoyment at the others. We had forgotten about the hooligans, when suddenly there was the sound of breaking glass and a brick flew in through the window, hitting the stove and breaking in two, and just missing the heads of a dancing couple. We ran out into the street but could see no one. Somebody shouted:

"It was Larka."

The jollification went on till dawn. The girls went off home and we remained to discuss the hooligan's act. The comrades wanted to take revenge, but I said the best thing to do would be to forget the whole affair. The lads were angry and would not listen to me. At five o'clock we left for the factory without having decided anything.

The Volga had overflowed its banks, filling the roads right up to the houses in the factory settlement. There was boating every Sunday on the river. The lads and girls came in their Sunday best; there was the sound of music. The boats came upriver against the current; races took place on the flooded roads; then all the boats gathered into one long line and drifted down-river with the current to the Pechory monastery.

As it was the tsar's coronation day the factory was idle. Lebedev and I went over to Afanasyev's to arrange about boating. Some boats were tied up almost at his door; Larka was standing in one of them. Afanasyev came out of the house with the brothers Zamoshnikov. When Mikhail Zamoshnikov saw Larka, he jumped into his boat and shouted right in his face:

"You threw a brick through Zalomov's window, you scoundrel."

He swung his hand and, in front of all the young people there, gave Larka one on the ear. Larka turned pale, but said nothing, took the oars and rowed away from us.

In the afternoon I strolled over to Alexander Zamoshnikov's. The comrades were already in the boat and told me that Larka had been treating some workers from the Zobnin factory to several bottles of vodka, and they were now on the river waiting with gaffs to sink us. I proposed that we put off the outing, but the comrades were dead against me, and said that if I was afraid, well, I didn't have to go.

"And three of you are going against three boatloads?"

"Right. We're going."

"And what do you think you will prove by that?"

"We'll show them that we're not cowards."

"And do you think that will help the revolution?"

"Well, if you don't want to come, we'll manage by ourselves."

"Oh, all right, I'll come with you. If it's fight they want, let's do it properly."

We went back into Zamoshnikov's house, took a couple of hatchets and two sharp-pointed spikes, which would do in the place of daggers. We rowed about till dark, but there was still no sign of the "enemy."

"Well, where are the Zobnin people?"

"They're behind the big Pechory island. They want to lure us there and sink us."

"So they're hiding. Who is afraid of whom? We of them or they of us?"

"Let's meet up on them from behind the island."

"Now that will be the height of stupidity! Why should we attack them. Just think! Here are revolutionary workers from the Kurbatov factory, 'glorious heroes,' Alexander Zamoshnikov, Leonid Lebedev, Nikolai Afanasyev and Pyotr Zalomov, going to break their skulls against some drunken Zobnin workers. Why? Because someone threw a brick! People will never forget their names. We've already proved both to ourselves and everybody on the river that we are not cowards and are not afraid of being sunk. Enough of this stupidity! Let's go to the bank and into town to see the illuminations."

The would-be heroes looked laughable and silly. The comrades "stacked their arms" in the house, and we roamed round the town. None of us mentioned the incident afterwards.

Kulbitsky, a police spy, who was always following us, had become unbearable. In a clash with Alexander Zamoshnikov, he exclaimed openly before all there: "There's always a cage waiting for a lion." He poked his nose into every place we went.

Once at dinner-time, just before the whistle blew for the end of the break, we were standing on a wooden platform in front of the factory looking at the waves of the Volga. Kulbitsky turned up and tried to pick a quarrel

with us. Turning to Zamoshnikov and Lebedev I said, jokingly, "Why bother with him, let's throw him in the river." I had no sooner said it than they lifted up Kulbitsky and dropped him into the water while holding on to his coat. When he was pulled out he was as white as a sheet and trembling all over, and wasted no time in getting away from us. He was less troublesome after that, although he continued stubbornly to watch us inside the factory.

## I MEET THE GENDARMES

1896, the year of the Nizhny Novgorod All-Russian Exhibition, was a memorable year for the Marxist organizations of Sormovo and Nizhny Novgorod.

An unprecedented uplift took place in the Sormovo May Day celebration held that year on the left bank of the Volga. Nearly a hundred fighters for revolutionary Marxism assembled under the red banner.

There were factory workers, compositors from the printshops, and members of the intelligentsia, whose every word we absorbed eagerly.

Speeches, revolutionary songs.

We exulted in our strength, and our aim—the armed uprising against tsarism, seemed to be near.

This May Day was our triumph. But evidently there had been a police spy among us, and we paid dearly for his presence. The gendarmes, in expectation of the tsar's visit to the Exhibition, were more zealous than ever in hunting down dangerous people. Some were caught on the spot and we were all shadowed. Almost the whole of our organized membership found themselves in prison. The few of us who had been left at large had a guilty feeling about the arrested comrades. What would they think of us? What if they doubted us and thought that we had betrayed them? We felt terribly ashamed. We vowed to each other silently, since there was no need for words—we saw the pledge in each other's eyes and felt it in the tighter handgrip: we must work, we must replace those who had been taken from our ranks.

Unexpectedly, a gendarme came into our shop, walked right up to my bench, and announced imperiously:

"Be at the colonel of gendarmes office in Gruzinsky Lane at twelve prompt!"

I asked him to repeat the address and deliberately made him go over the details several times. I went home. There I looked at myself carefully in the mirror. I took some soot out of the stove, mixed it with oil, and smeared this over my face. Then I daubed my hands with it. The change was striking. I squeezed my nose with my fingers to make two dirty marks, pushed two small pieces of dirty wadding up my nose so that breathing became difficult and I had to keep my mouth half open. My face looked foolish in the mirror. Now I was fully satisfied, and in my greasy, patched and dirty clothes went off to have my first meeting with Kuzubov, the colonel of the gendarmes.

I was searched before going into the colonel's office. He was a large, massive figure, with a big head and a pale handsome face with large, black shrewd eyes. A revolver lay on the table.

"Ah, he's afraid," I thought. "This is the man who has put my comrades in prison." And a wave of blind hatred came over me.

"Come over here and sit down."

I went forward slowly, and stood at a loss near the chair. And again the cold, calm voice resounded:

"Sit down."

I sat down uncertainly on the edge of the chair.

"Move it nearer."

I edged the chair a little nearer to him.

"Come on, right up to the table."

I pulled the chair forward until I was sitting with my stomach jammed against the table. The colonel looked me in the eyes for a minute without saying anything.

"Do you know Nina Alexeyevna Rukavishnikova?"

I sniffed and wiped my nose with the index-finger of my right hand.

"No. I never heard the name."

The colonel leaned back and took a piercing look at me.

"There she is."

On the table was a photograph of the woman who had explained the teachings of Marx and Engels to us. I bent forward and gazed at the picture.

"Do you know her?"

"No, I never met her."

Again the cold face leaned towards me, and the large, black eyes tried to find out what I was thinking, but I was confident that my mask was impenetrable.

"Do you know Alexander Zamoshnikov?"

"Of course. He works in the pattern-shop, not far from me."

"During the autumn of 1894, you used to go with him in the evenings to Nina Rukavishnikova's house in Kovalikhinsky Street to study the criminal doctrines of Marx," said the colonel through his clenched teeth.

"But I told you I don't know any Rukavishnikova. If I went to her place, surely I would know her. I told you I knew Zamoshnikov; I used to go night-fishing on the Volga on Saturdays with him. He has a boat."

"Do you know Nikolai Afanasyev?"—showing me another photograph.

"I know him. He works on bolts at the vices alongside me."

"The student Maryshev, a hairdresser's son, do you know him? There he is."

Another picture was flung down among the others. But now I looked blank; Maryshev didn't exist as far as I was concerned, but I looked at his photo attentively, and answered dully:

"I don't know him."

"Yes, you know him all right."

"How would I know him? I'm not a student or a hairdresser, I'm a worker."

"You used to go to Nikolai Afanasyev's in the autumn of 1895 with Alexander Zamoshnikov, and Maryshev read out *The Communist Manifesto*."

"No. I never went to Afanasyev's but I hired him to



play the accordion at my birthday party, but that wasn't in 1895, it was in 1896, on the 3rd of May."

"Do you know the student Kuznetsov? There's his picture."

"I don't know him. Didn't I tell you I'm a worker. Where would I meet students? Students don't work in factories."

"You were a member of a criminal circle along with Kuznetsov."

"I'm not a member. I'm a fitter, and I work in the Kurbatov factory. I don't know anything about any criminal circles. And, please, Your Honour, let me go now. The whistle will be going soon and I'll be late for work and the foreman will be cursing me."

"You may go," said the colonel, unexpectedly ending the interrogation.

I rose and went out of the office, but the gendarmes didn't believe that the colonel had let me go and I was allowed out only after they had received the order from the chief himself.

I had heard earlier that the students, Maryshev and Kuznetsov, had not stood up to solitary confinement and had divulged the names of all the workers who had attended their study circles—now I was sure of it myself. I had a feeling of loathing towards them. We had thought a lot of Kuznetsov especially. Nikolai Afanasyev, Alexander Zamoshnikov, Leonid Lebedev, Grigory Kozin and I had been members of his circle.

We had admired Kuznetsov for his vivid explanations of the basic teachings of Karl Marx, and none of us had the least doubt about his sincerity. Although he was a wealthy trader's son, he himself had told us that the one class which would remain revolutionary right to the end was the proletariat, and had warned us that the liberal-bourgeois intelligentsia was changeable and would betray us.

"All kinds of people will come among you: students, college girls, technicians, officials, professional people, pupils of Gymnasiums, but I am confident that the major-

ity of them will betray you just as soon as you overstep that limit which they have set themselves as their goal. They want to take power with the help of the proletariat, and if the proletariat comes to power, these people will become your most bitter enemies."

These straightforward words made us believe with even greater force in Alexander Kuznetsov. And now they had been confirmed by his own example; he himself had turned out to be a traitor. Our crushed hopes in the intelligentsia were a bitter experience for us. We thought of it this way: if Kuznetsov cannot endure the torture and turns traitor, others will be even more likely to do so. We ourselves must study, we ourselves must organize the proletariat.

Very quickly and painfully we sensed the absence of the intelligentsia. When I returned to the factory from the gendarmes office, everyone kept away from me as if I had the plague. Even some members of our organization—the "old men"—had been so terrorized that they did not dare to speak to me.

Study? But what? How? I began to take books out of the public library and on my few free evenings I read Dickens, Zola, and Victor Hugo. The times were hard; there was no political literature of any kind; there were no comrades left, and fifteen paces away from me the police spy, Kulbitsky, was working. Even the booklets which the young people read eagerly were not to be had.

### AGAIN IN THE ORGANIZATION

Gradually the young workers' attitude to me began to "thaw." I went fishing sometimes with several of them. I gave them legal books to read: *Spartaco*, by Giovagnoli, *Germinal*, by Zola, *Rienzi*, *the Last of the Tribunes*, by Bulwer-Lytton, *Looking Backward*, by Edwards Bellamy; I also had discussions with them.

But the assistant technician and the foreman had begun a campaign of persecution against me and were continually threatening to dismiss me. The police spy reported that young workers were assembling round my work-

bench; the assistant technician accused me of loafing and said he would put me out of the factory.

This went on until the spring of 1897. One evening after work, Vasily Alexandrovich Vaneyev,\* my old school-mate, met me as I was coming out of the factory. I had heard of Vaneyev as a revolutionary and had great confidence in him. Vaneyev put me in touch with Zinaida Pavlovna Nevzorova, who introduced me to her sister, Sophia Pavlovna Nevzorova-Shesternina.

To me the sisters were a most surprising couple. They were admirable, young, beautiful, vivacious, self-reliant, well-educated, and talented. They were so completely unlike any other women I had met before. Maryshev's and Kuznetsov's treachery had made me suspicious of every intellectual, but there was nothing false or insincere about these girls. And yet I had doubts. I wondered what they were after, why they had come to the working class. Maybe, I would have had more faith in them if they had been less attractive. I could understand good-looking young working women becoming interested in revolutionary work, because, after all, they shared the workers' life. But intellectuals?

We young workers used to say among ourselves: "We'll likely perish in the struggle, but our grandchildren will have freedom and a new constitution." We thought the Russian working class would win victory only when it grew numerically and politically strong and had a large labour party like those in the leading European countries. None of us even dreamed of being alive to see the proletarian revolution in Russia.

We understood clearly the role of the peasants and that the working class could not succeed without their aid. Therefore, those who had connections in the villages carried out propaganda among the peasants. My sister Anastasia, Kozin's wife, was doing a lot of work among the peasant youth, and about twenty young village lads used to come to her house in Pechory village.

\* A. A. Vaneyev's brother.

Grigory Garinov spent the big holidays in the village of Lenkovo in the Makaryev District, doing propaganda work among the villagers. His elder brother Stepan, a peasant himself, was arrested for similar activity and went out of his mind after three months in solitary confinement.

The young workers had also agreed that when we were called up for military service we would continue our revolutionary propaganda in the army. My brother Alexander, who was taken to the army for five years, was continually agitating the soldiers during his term of service. Mikhail Zamoshnikov, who was called up after serving his term of administrative exile, was put into a disciplinary battalion for having conducted political agitation among the soldiers.

What attitude we should take to the intelligentsia was a lot less clear. Kuznetsov's action had played havoc among us; we were in a state of bewilderment and alarm regarding the intellectuals. We were so convinced of the innate treachery of the liberal-bourgeois intellectuals that we could not even imagine there were any exceptions among them. We had only one safe thing to hold on to—class hatred.

But the Nevzorova sisters; how could they hate their own class? Even the "old men" had lost heart, yet these girls were making contact with the workers and were as carefree about it as if the class struggle were some kind of a garden-party. They were aware that prison, exile, and even death awaited them—the same fate that overtook those almost legendary figures: Sophia Perovskaya\* and Vera Figner.\*\*

And then again I wondered if they had been planted on us by the stout Colonel Kuzubov.

\* S. L. Perovskaya (1853-1881)—revolutionary Narodnik, member of "People's Will." Executed for her part in the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881.

\*\* V. N. Figner (1852-1942)—revolutionary Narodnik. Sentenced to death in 1884. The sentence was later changed to hard labour for life.

But after one or two meetings with the sisters all my doubts vanished as the mist is dispersed by the rays of the sun. I was so happy that I felt like laughing and singing for ever. I thought: they are real people, true comrades! So such intellectuals do exist! Such splendid women! It was a grand feeling to know this, and my antagonism towards them changed overnight to gratitude. They were really on the side of the working class!

I had complete trust in these extraordinary women. When they asked me to get together those who had survived the arrests, I did it without the least hesitation. The time of our inactivity was over. The lack of numbers did not worry us any more.

The first one I told about the intellectuals was Grigory Yakovlevich Kozin, a boiler-maker in the Kurbatov factory, who had also escaped arrest. An early childhood illness had disfigured him: he had a flat nose and his eyelids drooped. Thick blue lips also marred his face, and only his curly golden hair saved his appearance.

He was one of the very best agitators, and acted on the workers like yeast in the making of pastry. Wherever Kozin was there was ferment, and sometimes strikes. If he found it difficult to open his own eyes, he was skilful at opening the eyes of other people, using legal books, and especially Tolstoi's story "Ivan the Fool." As he told it, the story became a deadly weapon directed against the autocracy, the landowners, and the capitalists.

Kozin brought in Vasily Ivanovich Zamoshnikov, a cousin of the arrested brothers, Alexander and Mikhail Zamoshnikov. Vasily, who had a heavy black beard, was much older than any of us, and was not well educated, but he alone of the "old men" did not hesitate to join our circle.

Our first meeting took place on the Mokhoviye Hills, which we reached in boats from various directions. The Nevzorova sisters arrived with Vasily Vaneyev. Like true Nizhny Novgorod townsfolk, we drank tea from a large sooty kettle which Kozin had brought with him. Round us the pine- and fir-trees swished noisily, the fire crackled,

and across the wide Volga the squat building of the Kurbatov factory could just be seen. It looked such a dirty hole that we could scarcely believe we spent the greater part of our lives there, sixteen hours a day, cut off from the sunshine and the fresh air.

When we got down to discussion, we spoke about the factory and the moods of the workers who had now lost their fears. The demand for literature was growing, only we didn't have any. . . . The Nevzorova sisters spoke of the need to expand revolutionary work in Sormovo. Vasily Zamoshnikov said that Mikhail Gromov, a turner, was also at large and was working in a small factory not far from the village of Bor. On the proposal of the Nevzorova sisters it was agreed to try and get Gromov to Sormovo. Zinaida Nevzorova asked me specially to get hold of Gromov and bring him to the next meeting.

On the following Sunday I rose early and went to Bor to find Gromov. I found his flat, but he was out at work. I asked his wife to tell him that I would come back on Monday evening. My second visit attracted the attention of the neighbours, who shouted in my hearing:

"Who's that, Dunya, always coming to see you?"

"It's my fancy man," answered the resourceful Mrs. Gromov.

This time I managed to meet Gromov. Over tea, we sat talking about various trivialities, and then he said he would see me part of the way home. Evidently the neighbours' curiosity was not without purpose. On the way I explained the reason for my visit; he agreed to join the circle and to find work in Sormovo.

I had not expected any other reply. A labourer's son, Gromov joined the Marxist organization in the Kurbatov factory in 1891. When Gromov was seventeen years old, he had braved the drifting ice on the Oka in a small boat. The boat had been crushed by the ice, and Gromov found himself on an ice-floe. Jumping from one floe to another he somehow managed to reach the opposite bank at Strelka.

Exhausted by his battle with the elements, he strained

every nerve to reach the house of Krukovsky,\* an engineer employed in the Kanavino chemical works, hoping to save him from the gendarmes, who, together with their colonel and the procurator, had chartered a lifeboat to cross the Oka.

Gromov was too late. He arrived just after the gendarmes had arrested the engineer, and Gromov himself was pursued and fired at by the gendarmes. He escaped by hiding in an empty stall on the market-place.

This was the same Gromov who one night on Great Pokrovka Street beat up a spy in sight of the police and got away with it, and who in broad daylight pushed another spy down the steep Otkos. No, I did not expect a refusal from such a member of the illegal organization.

Gromov was present at the next meeting and confirmed his willingness to get work in the Sormovo engineering and boat-building works. The Nevzorova sisters explained to him how best to build the organization so as to avoid its falling into the hands of the police as had happened in 1896.

They suggested the following conspiratorial plan: to create a basic group from ten of the most firm and tested comrades; each of these comrades to establish his own group of ten, educate the members in Marxism, and make them capable of setting up their own groups of ten. Only those who were in the central group should know who were its members. The same principle to apply to all the other groups.

The central group members had to know about all the other groups and the members of these groups, but each

\* In 1893, Grigory Moiseyevich Krukovsky was banished from Moscow to Nizhny Novgorod for his revolutionary activity. He quickly established contact here with the local Marxists—A. S. Rozanov, N. A. Rukavishnikova and others, and taught in a Sormovo workers' circle. Krukovsky brought a printing-press with him when he came to Nizhny Novgorod, and kept it hidden in the factory. It was the first Social-Democratic printing-press in Russia. After his arrest by the gendarmes, G. M. Krukovsky contracted tuberculosis and died in exile in 1895.

member of the subordinate groups should know only the members of his own group and the members of the group for which he was responsible. Under such a system it was impossible for the gendarmes to destroy the whole organization; at the worst any action against us would be limited to a single group of ten, should a spy succeed in entering it.

I adopted this method myself when I left the Dobrov and Nabgoltz factory to work in the Sormovo works. Grigory Garinov organized circles in the same way in Sormovo itself.

Zinaida Nevzorova taught me to write and read code, and when necessary, she sent *Nizhny Novgorod News* to me by post with a coded message marked in it. Contact was maintained through Vaneyev, in whose flat I met Sophia Nevzorova several times. Zinaida literally "coached" me in conspiracy. Our watches were adjusted to the minute. I met her on the street at an appointed place, and without stopping or greeting each other, without looking round, we exchanged the essential words about the time and place of a gathering or a meeting. She trained me to be so pedantically accurate that even yet I have not lost the habit.

Sometimes I took a paper with a coded message to her house quickly, pushed it into the letter-box on the front door, rang the bell and went off hurriedly.

A police agent was always on regular night duty watching the Nevzorovas' house; he stood on the other side of the street. No matter how quickly I tried to thrust the paper into the letter-box and ring the bell, one time he either noticed me or heard the bell ringing. He started shouting for me to wait until the door was opened.

Of course, I didn't stop, and when I had turned the corner rapidly, I went on into the fields. He ran after me yelling, "Sir, sir, you rang. Where are you going? Wait, they'll open the door for you." He wanted me to turn round so that he could see my face, but I kept on going. The shouts became fainter and then ceased altogether.



Obviously, he thought I was deliberately leading him into the fields, and was afraid to follow me.

I met Zinaida Nevzorova again in the evenings in Telyachy Lane, in the home of two dressmakers. The meetings here ended with the dressmakers being arrested. Once, when I arrived there at the hour agreed upon, three police agents tried to collar me, but I got off my mark speedily and disappeared before they recognized me. All they knew was that a tall dark man had approached the door. The gendarmes searched everywhere for the tall dark man and tried vainly to get his name out of the dressmakers, who proved to be more staunch than the highly educated students, Maryshev and Kuznetsov.

During the summer we held a meeting on the Mokho-viye Hills, at which there were more intellectuals than workers present. Vasily Alexeyevich Desnitsky, Maria Petrovna Ivanitskaya, Vaneyev, and others were there.

In the autumn we gathered in Anna Vesovshchikova's flat in Naberezhnaya Street; Anna was a cousin of mine. Gromov seldom came, but there was another worker, a joiner, Grigory Garinov, my eldest sister's husband, who worked in the Dobrov and Nabgoltz factory. This was the Garinov my mother had once "mobilized" in her attempt to keep me from revolutionary activity. He was fifteen years older than me, but instead of him convincing me, I had convinced him.

Garinov was a great acquisition to us. This obdurate man had been very hard to convince, but once assured in his own mind, he became most insistent in persuading others of the need for the struggle against tsarism and capitalism. He formed a group in the joiners shop, where most of the workers were from the village. Later, I persuaded Garinov to go to Sormovo, where he worked together with Gromov, doing much to strengthen the organization before I went there.

He also had been taught by the Nevzorova sisters, who created the original, basic framework of the Sormovo organization after the police raids of 1896.

In uniting with real revolutionary Marxists, such as the Nevzorova sisters were, we felt ourselves to be a great force. I did not know then that they had been members of the first Petersburg study circle led by Lenin. I knew nothing then of Lenin's work, but in comparing the Nevzorovas with other intellectuals, I thought that they were just the best representatives of the intellectuals which Marx had written about.

We were strongly attached to such intellectuals; we valued them highly and looked upon them as heroes. The role of the Marxist intelligentsia in the working-class victory was immense. Now that I am approaching the end of my life's work, the letters I get from those Marxist intellectuals who remained true to the proletarian revolution, to Lenin's cause, the cause of the Party, give me great pleasure.

The personal contact with the Nevzorova sisters, and with other similar Marxist intellectuals, made us stronger, helped us to develop, steeled and tempered us. The sisters exerted a great influence, not only among the workers, but also among the intelligentsia, with such people as the Ivanitskaya sisters and Vasily Desnitsky (Stroyev)\* who worked with us after the Nevzorovas had gone. Vasily used to say to me: "The Nevzorova sisters told me to be bold, so I was bold."

I owe a debt to these sisters that can never be repaid. That I gained the tough qualities required of a Bolshevik revolutionary was due entirely to them. When I left the meetings in Anna Vesovshchikova's flat after discussions with the sisters I was so uplifted spiritually that I seemed to be walking on air. Their descriptions of the mass struggles of the British, Belgian, and German workers, some of them taking the form of general strikes, were es-

\* Vasily Alexeyevich Desnitsky (Party pseudonyms—Stroyev and Lopata) began to take an active part in Social-Democratic work in Nizhny Novgorod from the year 1897. He was one of the leading Party workers between 1903 and 1909. Subsequently he gave up revolutionary activity and is at present a professor of literature.

pecially absorbing. It appeared to me that there was only one step from a general strike to an armed revolt, and I believed that this was inevitable and near.

Our meetings usually ended very late at night. I walked home alone proudly, and hardly able to contain my enthusiasm. If anybody had seen me he would have thought I was mad. I could almost see the boundless columns of the world proletariat moving into the final battle. I could almost hear the iron beat of their tramping feet, and I experienced an unusual and incomparable feeling of joy. I was thankful that I had not been born into a wealthy family, that I knew the full weight of poverty and exploitation, that I could fight with a pure heart for the great happiness of all toiling humanity, and help to guide the workers towards our common goal.

Sophia Nevzorova once proposed that I should give up work in the factory and prepare to enter the secondary technical school in Nizhny Novgorod. She explained that I would get assistance to enable me to finish school. I should have been in the seventh heaven if this suggestion had been made to me before I took up Marxism, but now I had other interests, and I turned down the proposal.

Sophia simply could not understand my refusal. I said that I did not wish to sever my connections with the working class, that foremen and technicians generally were detested by the workers, who looked on them as weapons in the hands of the exploiters.

On another occasion, Zinaida Nevzorova asked me about my aim in life. I replied that I wanted to forge two more revolutionaries like myself. She smiled and never asked me this question again.

But by the time I was saying good-bye to her before she went to join her fiancé, Gleb Maximilianovich Krzhizhanovsky, in Minusinsk, in the Yenisei Province, I wanted something more: to go to Sormovo and build a strong, revolutionary Marxist organization there that no gendarmes would ever get their hands on, let alone smash, and which would lead the workers to the armed uprising.

At the beginning of 1898, I was sacked from the Kurbatov factory. I tried persistently to get a job in other factories, but met with refusals everywhere. Then I decided to try repair work on a steamer in the Murom backwater.

I was taken on and put to work as a fitter on a tug-boat being repaired by a merchant called Vagin. It was an old boat, the engine was decrepit and badly in need of capital repairs, the cylinders needed reboring, the pistons were worn out, and the shaft journal and other details were very much the worse for wear. It would have been too expensive to have the engine repaired in a factory, so the experienced and calculating owner thought it better to employ a few more workers whose hands would replace all the factory lathes.

The boat's command was made up of the boat steward and the engineer. The engineer instructed me to work on the crank-shafts, which I was supposed to regrind, and most important, to turn their worn-out threads to the exact calibre as would be done on a lathe. They were worn down by about six millimetres and were no longer round but flat. I had to remedy this defect with the aid of a fitter's file.

When I had finished, the engineer made the most careful check of the diameter with the aid of callipers, and instead of the fifty kopeks a day I had been getting in the factory, he put me on the highest daily rate of a ruble twenty kopeks.

I was moved from one job to another, working either at the vices under a tarpaulin sheet on the deck or in the engine-room. We started at 5 a.m. and with breaks for breakfast and dinner we worked to the last ounce of our strength till seven in the evening.

There was a pool of water covered with a crust of ice in the engine-room; the ice broke under our feet which were wet all the time. In the mornings, our boots froze, and our feet were like ice. During breakfast in the warm winter workshop, I had to stamp my feet for a full half-hour to restore the circulation. After breakfast, my feet

were warmer and I did not feel the cold so much during the rest of the day.

Forty-five workers gathered in the winter workshop at meal-times. On both sides of the door two small lockers had been built for the use of the engineer and the steward. Some of the men worked in the smithy and in the copper-shop, others on vices in the winter workshop, but most of the fitters worked on the boat itself.

Two new springs for cylinders were cast and grinded in the factory but their diameter was bigger than ordered, and after they had been turned on the lathe they had to be fitted in brackets and filed to the required size. Two men were put on each cylinder. My mate was a tall young fellow like myself.

First of all, using the narrow-bladed cutter and a chisel, we cut off thirteen millimetres within the cylinder, after which its diameter had widened by twenty-six millimetres. The cylinder was narrow in the centre and widened out at the ends. We tried to file the inner walls with old files, which were soon "eaten up." We had to resort to cutters. We had plenty of these, but there was nothing to harden them with. We tried to harden them with potassium salt, but they blunted quickly, and we were forced to go often to the smithy. The engineer and the steward began to look sideways at us; the older fitters swore at us and said we were running about instead of working.

Inch by inch we hammered down the spring into the cylinder, smeared it lightly with grease, and applied all our strength to scrape the rough surface of the casting, though it was very difficult.

Two elderly fitters worked on the other cylinder. They were shorter built than we were and found it easier to work in the narrow cylinder.

My mate and I sat inside the cylinder facing each other. We were hampered by our long legs and did not know where to put them. We needed the full use of our arms and had to find a place for the candle, without which it was impossible to see what we were doing. I suggested

that he place his feet against my shoulders and I put mine against his thighs. We adopted such quaint and fantastic poses that we looked more like a couple of clowns in a barrel than respectable fitters. But we moved the spring steadily into the cylinder, clearing the way for it with cutters.

We finished the job three days sooner than the older fitters and were then put on other work. But we did not gloat over our success; we were sorry that the older men had lagged behind.

I worked on bearings for a while and was then transferred to repairing pistons together with another fitter. The pistons and piston tops were in the same dilapidated condition as the other parts of the engine. Between the piston-balls we had to cut to a depth of thirteen millimetres. We had no protective glasses and the chips of metal from my mate's work flew into my face.

On the third day of the job, on a Saturday morning, a bit of metal hit me in the right eye and stuck there. My eye started to water, but I did not want to lose the ruble twenty kopeks wages, so I kept on working, thinking that I could go to the hospital on Sunday morning. I worked till dinner-time, and then to the end of the shift. My eye was swollen, so I decided to take the ferry-boat over to the town, as at that time the ferry-men had begun to take passengers through the floating ice. I knew they would not accept me at the out-patient department of the hospital till Sunday morning, as cases were not accepted in the evening.

I could not wait that long and decided to visit an eye-doctor, Zolotnitsky, a man who prided himself on his liberalism, and whose flat was known to me. He lived in Great Pokrovka Street. It was already dark when I got to his place.

A servant-girl opened the door after I had rung the bell. I went into the front hall and asked for the doctor, saying I was a worker and had a chip of metal in my eye and I needed his help. The girl went inside, closing the folding doors behind her. I listened, but she spoke so

quietly that I could not make out a word. In answer, I heard a discontented woman's voice saying:

"Didn't I tell you to let no one in? You know the master is going visiting. Go and say that the master is out and won't be back till midnight."

The girl came out and repeated her mistress's words, which I had already heard. I sat down on a chair in the hall and said calmly:

"All right, I'll wait for him here."

She went away. Then I heard more voices, a man's among them, but the words were inaudible. I remained sitting and waited patiently.

Five minutes later the girl came out again.

"The master has gone to see some friends, and will go from there to his club, and won't be back till very late."

"That's all right. I'll wait here for him till morning, and, if need be, till tomorrow evening, but I can't leave. I have a piece of metal in my eye; it's swollen, and I might lose my sight."

She went back into the house and did not show herself again. I waited at least ten minutes. Suddenly the door opened; I saw a tall handsome man with a beard, and heard him say:

"This way, please."

I followed the doctor through a big room with a parquet floor and into a richly furnished office. There was a fashionably dressed lady there that I could see was his wife.

A big lamp stood on the table; the doctor asked for another to be brought in. The lady went out and came back with a lamp like the one on the table. I was asked to sit down. The doctor got his instruments ready. Turning to me, he said:

"You'd better come in the morning. It's very difficult to see with artificial light."

"But I've a bit of metal in my eye. It's all swollen now. If I had waited till morning you would have said that I had come too late, I should have come yesterday, and

that I should be in hospital. But I have to work every day to feed myself and my family."

After looking at the eye, the doctor agreed that it had to be attended to quickly. He put some drops into my eye. The lady went behind me, took my head in her two hands and pressed it strongly to her chest. The doctor worked steadily at the eye. He probed it with a straight, slender instrument, moving the lamp now and then for better view. He looked at it several times through a magnifying glass, again probed, and said to his wife that he was not yet finished.

I knew that even a particle of cast iron would break, so I sat as unflinching as a stone. The doctor extracted the piece of metal and advised me to keep the bandage on for several days. I paid him three rubles and went home. On Sunday, I made the round of the shops hoping to buy protective glasses, but I could not find any. I bought an eye-lotion from the chemist's and sat all day bathing my eye to get rid of the inflammation more quickly.

On Monday I was again rowed over the Volga. I took the bandage off and started to work. Everything went fine for two days, but on the third I got another bit of metal again in my right eye. This time I did not wait, and after telling the steward what had happened, I made my way to the Martynovskaya hospital in Zhukovskaya Street, where they drew out the fragment.

After that I was determined not to work again at this job without protective glasses. I searched the whole town, and finally found a pair in the Nizhny Novgorod market in the shop of the English firm "Ballod." When I restarted work I enjoyed the feeling of security. My beard was full of particles of metal. The chips were often painful to the face, but I knew that my eyes were safe. Such was "industrial safety" under the old tsarist regime.

We slept in the workshop, and every night I had to crook myself up on the floor right at the corner near the joiner's bench. My bed was a sack which I had brought from home, and my pillow a log wrapped in my wadded



jacket. Lying like a half-shut knife all night was anything but restful.

Then the owner took down the winter workshop and carted it off. Now everything had to be done on the boat. We had to sleep in the cold, and drink cold water as there was no place to make tea. When we complained about it, the steward said that the river-police forbade the lighting of fires on the boats.

Once when it was close on breakfast-time, I suggested that we go down to the tavern near the ferry and have our tea there. On the way I spoke to my fellow-workers about how the working class was exploited, and about the struggle which the workers of all countries were waging against the capitalists. I told them about the strikes then going on in Russia, and reminded them that Vagin, for whom we were working, was one of the most fraudulent exploiters, and that he would reap a huge profit from the repaired tugboat, while he paid us in kopeks. He penned us up in a dark work-place unfit for cattle, let alone men, would not even give us straw for bedding, and compelled us to sleep side by side on the dirty, rotting, cold floor.

I explained that although we worked from five in the morning till seven in the evening, while the working day in the factory was from seven to seven, we were paid less than regularly employed factory workers. Then I proposed that we go on strike for a reduction of the working day, a twenty per cent wage increase, warm sleeping quarters, and hot water to make tea.

Several of the workers had been won over earlier by me, and the proposal for strike action was accepted. We sat in the tavern for several hours talking things over, drinking tea and having a bite to eat. I maintained that the strike would be won, because there were no other workers available, and the employer, who paid us less than forty rubles a day, stood to lose hundreds of rubles every day from that one boat alone if it remained idle.

When we were back on the boat we placed our demands

before the steward. He listened to us as if it were nothing out of the ordinary and said that at the first opportunity the boat would be taken to the Sofronov quay, and he promised to put our demands before the owner.

I was badly clad, and I made up my mind not to remain on the boat. I told the steward that even if our wages were increased, I was finished working until the boat had been taken into the town port as I was not going to risk my health working in that place for another ten to fifteen days.

I crossed the Volga again and went home. Three or four days later word came to me that the boat had tied up above the Krasniye barracks, so I went back to work. When I got on to the boat I learned that our demands had been granted; the owner had increased the wages by twenty kopeks a day, but that the engineer was riled at me for having stayed off work for several days.

Soon afterwards the engineer came on board, followed by the steward and Vagin, the owner. I said that I had heard about the boat having been brought into town and had come to restart work. My mates were right: the engineer told the owner that I was the main culprit behind the strike, and he insisted that I be dismissed as a dangerous agitator.

I was surprised at this, but even more astonished when the steward, whom I had looked on as a toady, began hotly to defend me as a conscientious, sober, and very good worker.

But the engineer had his way: Vagin handed me my passport and paid me the wages owing to me. Then he asked me:

"What is your name?"

I thought it was an unnecessary question, because he had had my passport in his hands and had looked it over, so I didn't answer him. He turned to the steward and the engineer with the same question, and the engineer answered hastily:

"His name's Zalomov."

Vagin took out a note-book and wrote down my name.

Then I asked him a question:

"What's your name?"

He did not reply either. I turned round to the workers and asked them:

"What's the boss's name?"

Somebody said, "Vagin."

I took out a pencil and a bit of paper and wrote his name down.

I knew that Vagin was just trying to frighten the men, although there was always the possibility of him reporting me to the police.

I never found out whether he did or not; all I know is that both before and after my work on the tugboat, when I tried to find work in the factories, I got one and the same answer: "We don't need workers."

### SORMOVO

After my dismissal from the tugboat, I got work in the Dobrov and Nabgoltz milling machine factory in Nizhny Novgorod, but in the autumn of 1900, I was sacked from there too—as an unruly worker. Even if they had not got rid of me, I would have had to leave anyway as I was being watched by the police. An agent had been assigned to me; he was clever and cunning and had always a reason for being wherever I was. This hindered my political work so much that I was not sorry to be told that my services were no longer required.

I was worried in case the police would not let me start in the Sormovo works, where I had wished to be for a long time. However, things turned out all right. I was taken on as a fitter in the machine-shop, in a squad making connecting-rods for locomotives.

While the gendarmes did not stop me from getting work here, two or three days later a new "fitter" came into the squad—a gendarme with a red beard. My mate was a fitter named Pokrovsky, who shortly afterwards joined one of our circles. The gendarme worked beside him; evidently he had learned the trade earlier. But everyone

knew who he was, although he thought his past was unknown. He wasn't smart enough even to cut his florid beard.

When I was absent, he found excuses to rummage through my coat-pockets and poke around my tool-box; my mates told me about it afterwards. When anyone came over to me, the gendarme stood in a position most awkward for the work he was supposed to be doing, and without the least embarrassment, cocked his ear in our direction. We laughed at his stupidity till the tears came.

We were on piece-work, and the rates were continually being reduced. We worked overtime, nights and Sundays, straining ourselves to the limit.

In winter during the hard frosts, when we came into the shop, we laid out our tools, sat down on the benches and talked till the whistle blew. The shop was cold; we were freezing in our jackets or short sheepskin coats, but warmed up quickly when work started.

I usually began to work with my jacket on, then took it off, and later, when the place had been warmed up by the heating system, I took off my waistcoat and blouse, rolled up my sleeves, and worked sweating in my undervest.

Neither the technician nor the foreman nor anyone else paid any attention to us; indeed, there was no need to drive us. A man who went to the lavatory once too often could not catch up with his mate, who would finish his half of the job and then stand around doing nothing, as the rods could not be turned over before both halves were finished.

Piece-work was not on an individual basis, but on a squad basis, and so cases of lagging behind were rare, since the whole squad was interested in making the maximum, and swore at the laggards.

Five minutes before stopping time, we collected our tools, washed our hands and for two or three minutes hung around or sat on the benches resting and chaffing one another and waiting for the whistle. Sometimes I used these few minutes to slip illegal literature or leaflets to Pokrovsky.

Once when I was sitting next to the gendarme, and Pokrovsky was standing opposite us, with the paper *Nizhny Novgorod News* sticking out of the inside pocket of his unbuttoned jacket, he happened to turn his head to hear what someone had said. I snatched the paper quickly out of his pocket and held it behind my back. We all laughed, especially the gendarme.

Pokrovsky blamed the gendarme for having taken his paper and demanded it back. The laughter grew louder. Biding my time, I returned the paper to Pokrovsky, having beforehand put some illegal pamphlets inside. Pokrovsky understood and acted as if he were taking the joke in good part.

I kept the leaflets in a tightly rolled bundle, tied together and hung on a hook I had sewn under the armpit of my coat-sleeve. I took off and put on my coat in front of the gendarme; as I said already, when I was out of the shop he searched my pockets, diligently feeling for secret places, but he did not have enough sense to look even once up the sleeves of my coat.

Once, when we had leaflets to distribute, I brought them in at dinner-time and they hung in my coat-sleeve until the end of the shift. When we had put our tools away, just before the whistle went, I sat on the bench, with my hands, as usual, behind my back. Pokrovsky tried to sit to the right of me, but the gendarme laughingly pushed his way between us, and Pokrovsky had to move a little farther away. We started a lively conversation, passing jokes. I pulled the packet of leaflets from my sleeve and passed it over to Pokrovsky behind the gendarme's back.

I came in early next morning, scattered part of the leaflets I had round the shop, and stuck a few over all the lavatory doors where the men found them and brought them into the shop.

Several leaflets fell into the hands of the squad foreman, who took them to the office. The management put the blame on "some evilly-disposed people," who, they

said, must have climbed over the walls near the lavatories during the night. The lavatories were in complete darkness, and electric lights were afterwards installed in them. No one suspected either Pokrovsky or myself, since we were in the "custody" of a gendarme.

So I worked side by side with the gendarme until I was arrested during the May Day demonstration of 1902; indeed, my arrest must have been a shock to him.

In my first days in Sormovo I had to press for the reorganization of our Party fund, of which I became the treasurer. It was a mutual-aid fund, but I insisted on it being converted into a purely Party fund, out of which we could buy *Iskra*, Lenin's newspaper, and other illegal literature, as well as give aid to comrades in jail.

The majority of the comrades agreed readily. The membership fees were arranged at one day's wages collected each pay-day, i.e., every fortnight. I handed the money to Yakov Gavryushov, my uncle, for greater safety; he banked it in his own name.

Contact with the Nizhny Novgorod group of Marxist intellectuals was also entrusted to me; I received forbidden literature and leaflets from members of this group and brought them to Sormovo. Several old members of the Party—M. Gromov, M. Samylin, and G. Garinov—recruited new workers to the organization. Gromov, Garinov, Samylin, Dmitry Pavlov, Semyon Baranov, Pog-nirybko, Uglev, Rybnikov and I made up the central group. For reasons of secrecy, we seldom met all together, five or six of us meeting often to discuss the tasks of the Russian working class, and our own work.

We kept to the conspiratorial plan of organization which had been recommended by the Nevzorova sisters in 1897-98. There were arguments about whom precisely we should recruit to the organization. Some took the view that if a worker expressed sharp dissatisfaction with the management and was sympathetically inclined towards revolutionary struggle, that was sufficient reason for bringing him into the organization.

I told them what I knew about police agents who adopted a super-revolutionary pose to win people's confidence, and went on to show further that there were types of men who were enthusiastic one minute and cold the next minute. I said that treachery was not the sole prerogative of police agents, that honest workers who were easily carried away and who overestimated their own will-power could fall into the hands of the police and under torture betray their comrades. Not all workers by far could be revolutionary Marxists, I maintained, and we had to strive, not for quantity, but for quality.

I said that the most valuable aid we could give to a worker was to make him politically conscious. Some comrades, I said, had an impatient desire to "suffer" for the cause, and I pointed out that the cause is not served by the rapidity with which one lands in prison or exile, but by one's ability to hold out as long as possible in order to educate the greatest number of workers in the spirit of Marxism.

Our first task was to strengthen the organization both in numbers and in quality, and in this task we were assisted very much by the Marxist intellectuals with whom we kept close contact and under whose leadership we worked. Two of them, Vasily Desnitsky and the former medical worker, Ivan Pavlovich Ladyzhnikov, were carrying out propaganda in Sormovo. Desnitsky was a competent Marxist agitator and propagandist and had a big influence. But in the actual organization of the struggle itself, first place has to be given to Ladyzhnikov,\* who had a long record of revolutionary service, and was a very capable underground worker and practical leader.

\* I. P. Ladyzhnikov's revolutionary activity in Nizhny Novgorod was interrupted by his arrest in 1903. He worked actively in Petersburg in the years 1904-05, and on the instructions of the Party he went abroad in 1905 to take charge of the Party publishing house which was then issuing editions of the works of Russian writers. Ladyzhnikov was a close friend of Maxim Gorky and helped him over many years with a whole series of publishing plans. In the last years of Gorky's life, Ladyzhnikov took charge of his archives, and then worked on the literary heritage of the great writer.

Not a single important question in the work of the Sormovo Party organization was decided without his personal participation and advice. He had a flat on Kovalikha Street in Nizhny Novgorod which was unknown to the police. I went there almost every Saturday evening to pick up literature, let him know about the activities of the Party group and get his practical advice.

When the Sormovo organization was firmly on its feet, Ladyzhnikov prompted us to take the Sormovo cooperative society out of the hands of the works management, who were using it to rob the workers.

I expressed doubts about the plan: the chairman of the management board was Meshchersky, the works director, and the vice-chairman was Matskevich, the head of the trading department of the works. The management had big sums of money invested in the society and it would not be easy to make them disgorge the large dividends they received. The workers we appointed to work in the society might be thrown out of the works and arrested, and, in any case, it would still be difficult for them as they had no experience in cooperative trading.

But Ladyzhnikov foresaw ways and means of overcoming all these obstacles. He proposed that the comrades chosen to work in the society should be forbidden to work illegally, and that we should arrange for the election of several trustworthy Party sympathizers to the management board and the finance committee of the society, and that for current trading questions we should put forward the experienced cooperator, comrade Zakharov.

"Even if your efforts end in failure," Ladyzhnikov explained, "you must begin and carry on to the end, as even a defeat can be used for the political education of the workers."

I put Ladyzhnikov's proposal to the meeting of the central leadership, which agreed to it, and appointed Garinov, Gromov, and Rybnikov to work in the cooperative society, instructing them to refrain from doing illegal work.



There were just over 2,500 shareholders in the society, but all the 13,000 workers were interested in it as they bought their goods from the society, and suffered along with the shareholders from the abuses of the management who gave very poor quality for high prices and distributed dividends on the basis of the ruble share, giving nothing to those who bought on credit.

We explained that with the society in the hands of the workers, prices could be lowered considerably, the quality of the goods improved, and a higher percentage paid out in dividends to those who bought on account than to those holding shares. The working people supported these proposals.

The list of workers put forward in the elections gained the majority. The management cancelled the elections, but the workers, for the second time, and with even greater unanimity, voted for our list of candidates. The cooperative society passed into the hands of the workers.

The retiring board, to cover up their crimes, arranged a fire and burnt all the society's books and papers.

Under the workers the management board maintained their hold on the society for a long time, and were successful in showing the advantages of having a board made up of reliable people from among the workers themselves.

In addition to the old wood-built shop, the board put up a new, two-storey brick building. The board also built its own flour mill, a bakery, a sausage factory, smoke-curing sheds, and opened a new meat shop. Cattle were bought in Siberia and put to graze on rented meadows; textile goods were purchased directly from the factories, and so on. Dividends were distributed at the rate of five per cent per ruble on shareholdings, and twelve per cent on credit accounts. As supplies were bought at wholesale prices, the retail prices were reduced appreciably and the quality of the goods improved. Blood-sucking private traders had to close their doors, and the high quality goods

and low prices brought in buyers from Kanavino, and even from as far away as Nizhny Novgorod.

The progress made in the fight for the leadership of the cooperative society won support for the Party which had led this fight. Our organization grew numerically and politically. It was time to think about extending our activity.

In the second half of the summer of 1901, forty-five leading Party workers gathered in a wood on the Kanava. Vasily Desnitsky made the report, stressing the need to go over from propaganda work in the circles to mass work, with the systematic, instead of casual, distribution of leaflets.

The report was listened to with great attention, but most of those present took it unfavourably. I waited in the hope that at least fifteen or so would stand solid for the new method of work, but they were adamant in their objections to the plan.

These comrades argued that the time was not ripe for mass activity; there were too few of us to cope with the increased police vigilance, and our inevitable arrest would spread fear among the workers and retard the movement for a long time. Comrade Desnitsky made several unavailing attempts to change these opinions; I myself spoke twice to no purpose. We made no impression on the comrades and the meeting was adjourned.

I went off part of the way with Desnitsky, who was very despondent. I told him that the comrades would agree to the proposal; it was necessary only to speak to each individual member of the central group.

On the way home, I thought over what had happened; it was clear that many of the comrades were not yet mature enough to subordinate their personal interests to our greater, ultimate aims. Marxist education among them had only just begun. I had no doubts about the members of the central group; it was simply that Desnitsky's proposal had taken them completely unawares. This was con-

firmed not more than two weeks later when the Sormovo Party organization decided in favour of mass, agitational work.

Now we had to give greater attention to the conspiratorial side of our work. We met in various places in the form of social evenings. We organized a string band and practised in Sorokin's flat; in the intervals, we discussed our Party business. People stopped in the street outside to listen to the music, and our band at first attracted the police. But we played so persistently and long that they stopped troubling us. Sorokin's flat finally became the Party headquarters. Five or six of us used to meet at the Baranov brothers' house.

A meeting of the most trusted Party members was held in the forest outside of Sormovo at the end of the summer of 1901. Here were elected the Nizhny Novgorod Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The members elected were: I. P. Ladyzhnikov, A. V. Yarovitsky,\* A. I. Piskunov, Y. I. Piskunova, O. I. Chachina,\*\* with D. A. Pavlov and myself from the Sormovo organization.

The contact between the Sormovo Party organization and the Nizhny Novgorod Committee was, as before, Ladyzhnikov, whom I met very often. Ladyzhnikov was an

\* Alexei Vasilyevich Yarovitsky was an energetic member of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee, worked on the local newspaper, and engaged in writing. Gorky placed great hopes in him, but he died in 1903.

\*\* Alexander Ivanovich Piskunov and his wife Yekaterina Ivanovna Piskunova were prominent members of the Nizhny Novgorod *Iskra* underground movement at the beginning of the 1900s. Two meetings they had with Lenin had a big influence on their development as consistent Marxists. These meetings took place in 1900, the first in Nizhny Novgorod, when Lenin, in passing through the town, stayed at their flat; the second occurred in Ufa, where at that time N. K. Krupskaya and her close friend and collaborator, O. I. Chachina, Piskunov's sister, were in exile. When they returned to Nizhny Novgorod, the Piskunovs maintained regular contact with the *Iskra* centre abroad. This contact made itself felt in all the activity of the first Nizhny Novgorod Committee, of which Yekaterina Piskunova was Secretary.

even-tempered comrade, calm, good-natured, and considerate. His composure and lack of pompous phrases were what I liked most about him. He never once mentioned the word danger, although he always had a large supply of illegal literature, and for a long time kept a whole printing-press hidden in a hamper in his attic. Once he showed me a new trunk and asked me to look it over—it had two bottoms. Ladyzhnikov smiled and said:

“That’s where our literature is kept, but when the gendarmes raided the flat they found nothing.”

Subsequently, after the 1917 Revolution, some of the former illegal literature was found in this trunk where it had lain forgotten.

### THE DEMONSTRATION

In the autumn of 1901, Ladyzhnikov spoke to me about organizing a mass political demonstration of the workers. On one of the Saturday nights I stayed with him, he said he was sure that all of us, workers and intellectuals, who were being watched by the police, would soon be arrested. We must complete our work, he said, by doing something really big—an open political demonstration against the autocracy, timing it to take place in Sormovo on May 1, 1902. And on the red banner, under which we must assemble as many workers as possible, we must have the slogan: “Down with the Autocracy!” Ladyzhnikov said that the demonstration would serve to steel the Party, awaken and revolutionize the working masses, and give a tremendous fillip to the working-class movement.

The leading group of the Party organization in Sormovo, of which I was a member, set to work with great intensity to prepare the political demonstration. The Nizhny Novgorod Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. provided us with prohibited leaflets and literature.

The idea of an open demonstration against the autocracy became more and more popular and we anticipated a mass turn-out of workers.

We had to appoint comrades to carry the banners. There was a law in force which carried the death penalty by hanging for calling publicly for the overthrow of the existing order, and the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" on the banner which would be carried high over the great crowd, was just such a call. This meant that the banner-bearer would be hanged. The question was: Who would carry the banners?

The demonstration had to be carried through in a way that would make the greatest possible impression on the workers. The least show of fear or indecision on the part of the banner-bearers would have spoiled everything. Besides this, the Party and arrested comrades had to be protected at any cost, and for this reason the banner-bearers could not be identified with the organization, and had to take full responsibility on themselves.

At one of the meetings of the central Sormovo group, we decided to convene a meeting of the most trusted and reliable members of the circles. We met at the end of February in the village of Pochinki, in the home of the brothers Urykov. It was evening; there were sixty-one comrades present, excluding those on the watch outside. From the intelligentsia there were A. V. Yarovitsky, member of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee, Sophia Karasyova and the teacher and propagandist, Josephine Gasher. All agreed to the proposal to organize a demonstration. The slogans: "Long Live the 8-Hour Working Day!" and "Down with the Autocracy!" were accepted without discussion. We also agreed that those comrades who were unknown to the police should not take part in the demonstration, but remain at large to continue the work of comrades arrested.

The demonstration was appointed for May 1, or, in case of rain, the first Sunday after May 1. The demonstration had to be peaceful and comrades had to come unarmed. Every Party member was obliged to bring along as many workers as possible to Glavnaya Street, where the demonstration was to be held.

Towards the end of the meeting, I announced that the banner with the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" would be carried by myself; I claimed this right as the oldest Social-Democrat in Sormovo. There were no objections.

After the general meeting the preparatory work of the demonstration went on with increased energy. The output of leaflets rose to such an extent that the gendarmes and police became alarmed, and a detachment of mounted guards appeared in Sormovo, riding up and down the town and between Kanavino and Sormovo day and night, searching pedestrians and cab-passengers on the off-chance of seizing leaflets.

On the instructions of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. two mimeographs with rollers were made in Sormovo. These had to be taken to Nizhny Novgorod; I decided to do it myself. I got a table-cloth and a sheepskin coat, bound the mimeographs with a rope, wrapped them carelessly in the coat, and just as carelessly covered that with the napkin. The parcel was large, clumsy, and awkward to carry. Wool from the coat was sticking out all sides.

My comrades took fright at the size of the bundle, saying it should be made smaller, tied more tightly and the wool hidden from sight. They advised me against going into the railway station, and said that they would buy my ticket and accompany me.

"I'll get my own ticket," I replied. "I don't need anyone with me; that will only draw suspicion and put a stop to the whole thing."

Nevertheless, they insisted on following me to the station—Stephen Pognirybko, Mikhail Samylin, Dmĭtry Pavlov and Leonid Baranov.

Two gendarmes were standing outside the booking-office, one on each side of the barrier. As I was passing through I knocked the parcel against one of them, apologized, and went to get my ticket. On the way back, I jostled the other gendarme, again apologized, and went on to the platform and took a seat in the train.

Apparently the comrades had also got on to the train, as they overtook me as I came out of the station at Kanavino Highway. We walked on together to my sister's, Alexandra Pavlova. I was sweating with the weight of the package, and Alexandra gave me a dry shirt. We had some tea, and afterwards went to the Nizhny Novgorod theatre, taking seats in the gallery.

After the show, the comrades went home and I spent the night at my sister's. Early in the morning, I tied up the mimeographs in newspaper, took them to Ladyzhnikov's and hurried to get back in time for work.

I did not mention this case afterwards to the comrades, but it was clear that the lesson had not been in vain. I was told later how they had distributed leaflets at night walking about a hundred yards behind a group of mounted patrols.

There were quite a few comrades in the Sormovo Party organization who were better educated than I, more capable and energetic, and, perhaps, had more natural courage, but my advantage lay in the fact that I had matured politically when I was fifteen and a half years old, and had behind me ten years of revolutionary work.

There was a special discussion on the Sormovo May Day demonstration at the meeting of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee. The meeting took place in April 1902, in Kanavino, in the Babushkinskaya hospital, where Alexandra Kekisheva, a medical attendant, had a flat. (She had just been co-opted to the Nizhny Novgorod Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.) Ladyzhnikov was away somewhere.

Besides myself, there were two other members of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee present—A. Yarovitsky and A. Piskunov. Josephine Gasher also took part in the meeting. Olga Chachina, our fiery revolutionary, to our regret was not present.

The proposal for the First of May demonstration was endorsed by the Committee. An argument started about who should carry the banners. Someone said that intel-

lectuals must carry them. Piskunov insisted that the banner-bearers must be workers; I supported his proposal and it was agreed to.

We went on to discuss the slogans. The following suggestions were made: "Long Live the First of May!", "Long Live the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party!", and "Long Live the 8-Hour Working Day!" In place of the first slogan, I suggested: "Down with the Autocracy!" Piskunov opposed this. He declared that it would be wrong to put such a slogan on the banner as it was too dangerous. We argued for long, and I refused to give way.

Then instead of the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" he put forward: "Long Live Political Freedom!" I defended my proposal stubbornly, saying that the second one did not contain the call for the overthrow of the autocracy. Piskunov explained that the second slogan was a good substitute for the first, but was not as dangerous. Finally it was agreed to combine both slogans: "Down with the Autocracy! Long Live Political Freedom!" on one banner.

Discussion then took place on the part to be played in the demonstration by the intelligentsia. Voices were raised in favour of their participation, Josephine Gasher's being the most insistent. She said:

"We taught the workers, we called on them to struggle against the capitalists and the autocracy, and we must prove our readiness to fight side by side with them."

Her views were warmly supported by Kekisheva and Yarovitsky.

Prior to the demonstration, two more meetings were held in Kanavino to review the progress in preparing the demonstration. We expressed our opinions about the moods of the workers and the content of the leaflets to be distributed. A third meeting was held on the river in two boats among the drifting ice.

The shadowing of our members had become so troublesome that it was difficult to transport the leaflets. I had to ask Mother's help. She had some experience, having



taken a parcel of leaflets wrapped in bast matting to Ivanovo-Voznesensk when the strike was on there. Before she had undertaken this journey she asked me what the gendarmes would do to her if they found her with the leaflets—she was afraid of being tortured. I explained to her that nothing like that would happen to her; she was old, they would put her in prison or send her to Siberia. At the very worst, they might hang her.

"I'm not afraid of death, so long as they don't torture me," Mother replied as she agreed to go.

At the station she noticed a gendarme in one of the compartments. She went into the same one, placed the package under the seat, and sat down beside him. All through the journey she kept up a lively conversation with him. When she came back I shook her hand warmly, thanked her and told her how much I loved and respected her. She was overcome at my unusual tenderness and beamed with happiness, holding her hand against her breast.

Before the demonstration, she brought leaflets into Sormovo in buckets topped with sauerkraut. Once again she found a gendarme and took a seat next to him. This one was more inquisitive than the other, and in answer to his questions Mother told him that she lived in Pechory, that her daughter had married a Sormovo worker, and she was taking the cabbage to her as it was dear to buy in Sormovo in the spring.

Mother also brought the banners from Ladyzhnikov. Pavlov and Baranov hid them in the sand in a fir-grove outside of Sormovo.

There was another meeting in the woods on Easter Sunday morning to endorse the addendum to the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" The final meeting—on the night of April 29—was also held in the woods. Its aim was to lift the spirits of the comrades, which it did successfully, for when the meeting was dispersing the woods reverberated with revolutionary songs.

On the morning of May 1, we, the Party members, did not go to work, although it was raining from early

morning, and the demonstration, as agreed, had to be postponed to the following Sunday.

Ten or so of us gathered in Sorokin's flat, where, with psalteries, guitars, and mandolins, we played and talked. The time passed tediously; there were occasional downpours.

From dinner-time the weather began to improve. Two comrades were sent to Glavnaya Street to see how things were there. About six o'clock they came back to tell us that a large crowd had assembled. We decided to hold the demonstration immediately.

My home was near. I took my guitar there and told my sister Yelizaveta to put everything in order as I was going on the demonstration and might be arrested.

A rumour had circulated in the morning that two field-guns had been brought into town, and that two companies of soldiers were concealed in the storehouse.

There were almost five thousand people in Glavnaya Street. The Party members got together quickly; a few of them had been drinking. I was indignant with them, saying they would only bring disgrace on the demonstration and that we didn't need the false courage of drink, but the real courage of revolutionaries.

About two hundred lined up for the march. Singing revolutionary songs and shouting: "Down with the tsar, down with the autocracy!" we marched three times round the street, hemmed in by workers on all sides.

It was suggested that the banners be brought. Some workers, who had turned up the worse for drink, had allowed themselves to be provoked into demanding that the demonstration march to the works and smash the place up. Samylin and I restrained them.

"Our task is not to smash machinery," we told them, "but to rouse the masses by our political demonstration."

However, a crowd of about fifty made their way to the works office. The rest of us went in the opposite direction.

The news came that the soldiers were on their way to the works. The two Baranovs, Pavlov and I almost ran to get the banners which we had kept hidden till then. We

put them under our coats and returned quickly to the demonstration. On the way back we agreed that when the soldiers approached we would roll up the banners and mix with the crowd, in order to protect the Party organization.

The presence of the soldiers had added significance to the demonstration, drawing more attention to it and making its effect upon the workers' consciousness even more lasting.

I resolved to go forward alone with a banner in my hands to meet the soldiers, so that they might stick their bayonets into me in front of the masses of workers. I thought that this would produce a more striking impression than being hanged in some torture-chamber.

When we met the comrades waiting for us, I informed them about the plan for carrying through the demonstration; we had to retain the maximum number of comrades for revolutionary work, and therefore must retreat in an organized fashion, and mingle with the crowd when the soldiers approached. The signal for the retreat would be the lowering of the banners. They all agreed to this plan.

We attached the banners to poles and moved forward. We held the banners in such a way that the workers could read the slogans more easily. The end of my banner with the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" was held at first by Pyotr Druzhkin, then by some other comrade, and for the rest of the way by Mikhail Pavlov. Mikhail Samylin and I marched side by side.

We walked in the direction of the Darinsky Passage. We sang "The Varshavyanka," and before the clash with the soldiers, we changed to the workers' hymn: "Victims we've fallen in battle array."

The compact crowd filled both sides of the broad street, forming a living corridor. Our songs were accompanied as before by shouts of "Down with the tsar!", "Down with the autocracy!"

When we reached a pool of water which had accumulated from the rain and flooded across the street, we

heard the beat of drums, and then a company of soldiers in full battle order came out of a lane.

We closed in rapidly. We had no weapons, while the soldiers were armed to the teeth, but not one of us wavered. We marched on, singing. The officer could be heard distinctly giving the command:

"At the ready. Charge!"

We were close to the pool of water, when the soldiers, with bayonets raised, made a rush at us. The two small banners were quickly pulled off the poles and hidden under jackets. As had been agreed, the marchers slipped among the crowd and were lost to sight. Only a small group remained on the street.

Pavlov pulled at my banner. I jerked it away from him and raised it high aloft. Then, splashing through the water, I went on to meet the bayonets.

This was the happiest moment of my life, eclipsed only by the 1917 Revolution. It seemed to me that the soldiers were coming too slowly, and I quickened my steps.

And now quite close were the pale, frightened faces of the soldiers. "They're afraid of bombs," I thought triumphantly. . . . Now. . . .

I thought the soldiers would not stop, but keep on running with my body suspended on their bayonets. But they halted, though no order had been given. The bristling bayonets turned upwards. I went forward, right up to the first rank.

The officer tore the banner out of my grasp. My hands were seized. Blows from the butt-ends of rifles showered down on my body, and someone fumbled in my pockets. I did not feel any pain and shouted to the soldiers:

"Why are you hitting me? I'm not a bandit or a thief."

And at once the blows stopped, the rifle-butts were lowered and my hands were released. But I had been beaten so much about the arms that I could not lift them. I was put under guard and led off with the company of soldiers marching behind. While I walked away I counted

my escort. There were twelve of them. And again the thought came to me and I felt proud about it: "They're afraid. And of one man. And unarmed at that! What will happen when all the workers are class-conscious?"

The crowd thinned out quickly. I was alone with the soldiers and glad that none of the other comrades had been arrested.

We came alongside a whole pack of policemen who were beating a black-bearded man. Blood was streaming down his face. The police handed their victim over to the soldiers. It was now almost dark; they caught hold of another fellow, but I didn't recognize him.

### BEHIND IRON BARS

I was led into the police department attached to the works. My appearance was greeted with jubilation.

"Aha! So we've got you at last!"

A stout man with a florid complexion and a red beard yelled:

"The Red beast has been caught! Bring him in to His Excellency."

I was pushed into a room and saw the Governor, Unterberger, before me, and some other people. The Governor asked:

"Where did you get the banner?"

"I refuse to answer your questions."

"Well, I've warned you," he said and left the room. The soldiers had disappeared. Around me were policemen, gendarmes and some people in civilian clothes. A voice cried out:

"Sons of bitches! They wanted freedom. I'll give them freedom."

I turned at the shout. At that moment I got a blow in the back of the neck; then they began to beat me, hitting me in the pit of the stomach, in the solar plexus, on the head. The people and the room started reeling and swimming around me. I collapsed on the floor. They went on beating me, but I did not feel the blows. I was stunned;

it seemed as if my skull was broken. I was choking with nausea from the severe blows in the stomach. But this was nothing to the sharp, stinging pain in my heart, taking my breath away. I lost consciousness.

I came to when water was being spilled over my head. I tried to rise, but I could hardly move. My stomach felt as if it had been turned inside out; I felt sick. Again the beatings started. Somebody said, "Don't hit him on the face." The blows stopped. I made another attempt to get up, but again failed, though no one was holding me down.

Carefully I summoned up all my will-power, so as to take myself in hand, but every muscle of my body was trembling.

"Aha! So you've turned soft, you..." said a foul-mouthed gendarme.

The others laughed loudly and this hurt me more than the beatings.

"Will you tell us now who gave you the banner?"

"You've no right to beat me. I'll complain to the Governor."

My voice was firm with the loathing and hatred I felt. But my heart ached unbearably, and I pronounced the words with difficulty, and I could not keep my body from trembling. And this made me all the more angry; I wished only to have revenge for my intolerable humiliation.

My show of resistance called down more imprecations:

"And did you think we were going to kiss you? A beating's too good for you. So you're against the tsar! You should all be strung up. The Governor didn't want to soil his hands on you, you scoundrel. Do you think he'll listen to your complaints? He himself said that you should all be flayed alive. Now, where did you get the banner?"

"I refuse to answer."

My words were interrupted by a blow on the mouth. Something heavy struck me; once again they started beating me. I had a dreadful pain in my heart; I thought it would burst and I'd die.

I regained consciousness in a small cell; I was lying on a plank bed. The light of a lamp shone through the grill of the door. I wanted to cough. I coughed and spat; I felt a salty taste in my mouth. I tried to lift myself up, but I couldn't. I thought all my bones were broken.

The pain of the beatings I had taken became worse and worse, shooting through me like fire. But I suffered even more from the burning shame for the trembling and the tears that I had not been able to control under the torture. I wanted to cry out in my agony.

The tears came, but they were tears that brought me no ease. I hid my face and wept for my imagined strength. My favourite hero was Stepan Razin, and I had dreamed of acquiring some of the iron will that he had had. Not a muscle of Razin's face had quivered under the most fearful torture. He had not flinched even when his tormentors had chopped off his arm and leg.

And here was I, weeping and shaking in every limb from a simple beating. I had not uttered a single moan, but the gendarmes had seen my weakness and had thrown shameful and abusive words at me.

And how idiotically stupid was my threat to appeal to the Governor! I had been going to complain to the hunter who himself had set the hounds on me! My ears were burning with contempt for my imbecility. And what followed was even worse. I thought of how the comrades would have laughed if they had witnessed that scene: the banner-bearer, the enemy of the tsar and capitalism, fainting like a hysterical woman.

I was worried in case everyone got to hear about it and it made a bad impression on the comrades. I was angry because the gendarmes had not killed me. That would not have been so shameful, but to be beaten without means of retaliation was, to me, an insufferable disgrace. I determined to tell the comrades nothing about what had happened. Later, when I met Samylin, I said that I had had a few weak blows from rifle-butts and that I had been interrogated by the Governor at the police office, and

then slept so soundly on a bug-infested bed that I had not even felt them biting.

The sun came up and the daylight streamed into my cell. Gradually the pain died down; my body began to live again. My arms and legs ached, but I could move them. I touched my ribs—they seemed to be whole. I raised my shirt—there were conspicuous but ordinary bruises on my body. I brightened up and felt a bit more cheerful. They had arrested few people on the street and had extracted no information from me, and they would get none—of that I was sure.

I rose and went over to the cell door; on the other side was a guard with a rifle. I looked out of the window—there was one there too. That cheered me even more. I saw that they were protecting me as if I were buried treasure, and although I was aching all over, I lay down on the planks and went fast asleep.

The sleep quietened my nerves. When I awoke, something pressed on my heart, but the sharp, searing pain had gone.

I heard footsteps outside the door. A familiar voice cried: "Sons of bitches. You want freedom. I'll give you freedom." Then the sound of blows. It was another interrogation with a "fatherly reprimand."

About ten in the morning, my sister, Yelizaveta Garinova, was allowed in to see me. A negligent guard had let her in with food for me. She came in and went out again almost immediately, but managed to whisper that Baranov, Pavlov, Pognirybko and Gromov were still at large.

The news was like a tonic. I was especially pleased that they had not arrested Pavlov.\* It was quite evident that the police did not have full details about the

\* Dmitry Alexandrovich Pavlov, on the authority of all who knew him, was a fiery propagandist and agitator, an excellent organizer, and a man with a charming personality. After Zalomov's arrest, Pavlov took the leadership of the Sormovo Party organization, but he was soon arrested and exiled. He escaped from exile, and in November 1904 worked in Yaroslavl with Y. M. Sverdlov.



demonstration and consequently the number of victims would not be large.

My sister came a second time, with my dinner, but she was not allowed into the cell; the food was handed in by the guard.

I tried to converse with the guard at the window, but he whispered frantically that talking was forbidden.

Some more people were brought in for interrogation. They looked like workers, but now I could hear nothing, as I fell asleep.

I was wakened in the middle of the night and told to come out. Twelve soldiers under the command of an officer led me away. We embarked on a steamer. I was told to sit down on the deck, and the soldiers settled themselves around me. The officer went below.

A few minutes later I said to the soldiers quietly:

"Well, you've arrested me, beaten me with rifle-butts, and now you're taking me to prison like a wild animal in a cage. You wouldn't even let me say good-bye to my sister. I'm a worker from a peasant family. My younger brother, like you, is serving in the army. Maybe he's arresting someone too and beating him with his rifle, and taking him to prison. But I know this, he is not hitting and jailing the landowner, or the factory-owner, or the rich merchant, but the peasant and the worker. You aren't noblemen either; you're workers and peasants. You and I are brothers."

Several of the soldiers interrupted me with the whispered warning:

"Quiet, the officer is coming."

The officer came on deck, stood looking round for a moment and then went below again. Clearly he had seen

In 1905, he was again in Nizhny Novgorod, a member of the Party Committee. He came to Moscow later and took part in the work of the Moscow Party Committee. He was a member of the Petrograd Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party at the time of the second Russian revolution. He died in 1920, when he was Military Commissar of the 3rd Brigade of the 14th Rifle Division of the Red Army.

nothing suspicious and he did not show himself again. I went on talking softly. The soldiers were now listening to me with rapt attention.

"They told you that you had to defend the faith and the tsar. You were a whole battalion. Your pouches were filled with bullets. Why didn't they send you against the landowners, against the factory-owners, the capitalists who squeeze the last drop of blood out of the workers and peasants and doom them to poverty while they themselves live in luxury? Why didn't they lead you against the priests and the monks who order you to pray, and work, and fast, and they themselves do nothing but live off the fat of the land? Whom have they filled their jails with? Whom do they send to Siberia, to hard labour and exile for life? Workers and peasants. You won't find any landowners, or capitalists, or princes, or rich men, or priests there. The tsarist courts, the tsarist police have been created not to fight the landowners and capitalists, but to fight the workers and peasants."

I talked for a long time with the soldiers, explaining how the capitalist system works. I stopped talking only when the boat came into Nizhny Novgorod. The soldiers had said nothing, but I knew that I had won their sympathy, and I never forgot, and will not forget till my dying day, the whispered warning they gave me about the officer. There were twelve of them, but not one of them gave me away, otherwise I should have been answerable for inciting soldiers to overthrow the tsar.

The carefree officer came on deck as the boat put in to the landing-stage. Once more I was the centre of a ring of soldiers. Another large detachment escorted a group of arrested comrades right behind me, but I could not even make out how many of them were there. We were directed into a tram-car, with myself separated from the others. Mounted guards and police galloped on each side of the tram. Dawn had already broken when we reached the gates of the Nizhny Novgorod prison, where I was placed in a tower on the second floor—in solitary confinement.

## THE NIZHNY NOVGOROD JAIL

When I was alone in my stone cell, I started to sing. It was now daylight. After some time I heard the banging of the outer iron doors, then a rattling at my cell door, and in walked a diminutive warder.

"Singing is not allowed here."

"And why not?"

"This is a jail, not a tavern."

"And what's it matter to me?"

"The chief will put you in the dungeon."

"Let him. I can sing there too. My lips aren't sealed."

The warder went away. About two hours later, again the iron doors clanged, and a man with a large black beard moved into the cell accompanied by two warders.

"Stand up and take your cap off."

I remained sitting with my cap on.

"Take that cap off, and stand up."

"Take your own off, then I'll remove mine."

"I'm the chief of the prison."

"It's got nothing to do with me that you're the chief of the prison. I didn't fill in an application to come here."

"You're in custody and must obey the prison regulations."

"I'm neither a thief nor a murderer, but an honest worker. You can't hold me responsible if you don't like honest work, and are the chief of thieves and robbers."

"I'll put you in the dungeon for impertinence and insubordination."

"Are you also a hangman?"

The chief turned on his heel and walked out with his warders. I walked up and down the cell laughing to myself, but I didn't laugh long. Again the doors banged, and the chief reappeared, this time with three warders. Talk was opened up, not by the chief, but by the heftiest of the warders:

"Take that cap off."

"I won't."

"Take it off."

"No."

A blow in the pit of the stomach laid me flat on the floor. They kicked me and went away. Everything had happened so quickly that it might have been a dream, except for the pain. I lay a long time on the floor, then struggled up somehow and stretched out on the bare planks.

I had been told that political prisoners were not knocked about, that they were treated with more respect than criminals. I lay and thought the matter over. One thing was clear to me: I had acted foolishly, and, indeed, jail was not a tavern. But I hated the idea of standing with my cap off before every blackguard I met.

I expected to be put into the dungeon; it might even have been interesting, but nothing happened. They brought me a mattress and pillow stuffed with straw, and a grey woollen blanket. My body was aching, and with a sense of relief, I made myself comfortable on the bed.

For dinner I was handed a wooden bowl filled with sauerkraut soup, and a large chunk of black bread, but my stomach ached so much I could not face the food. Two or three days later Mother sent me in a pillow, a stool, and a small square table. The chief was proving to be not such a monster as he had seemed at first; he even gave Mother permission to bring my dinner every day. When I felt better, I started singing again, paying no attention to the protests of the warder, who no longer worried me.

My cell had been a store-room before they put me into it. It was cold and damp, with a small semicircular window high up and protected with thick bars. I soon became accustomed to the simple prison life. There was an inspection every morning. The chief made the rounds with two warders and always found me on my feet as the clanging of the outer doors warned me of his approach. I had already discarded my cap: I had a heavy crop of hair and didn't feel the cold.

Mother sent me a tin kettle and a glass and I drank tea in the morning and evening. The warder brought me two pounds of black bread every morning. Dinner was handed out at noon, but I did not eat it. A charitable society sent in eggs and white bread, and I was told that my money was in the office and I could spend it. The warder bought me the cheapest cheese he could find and robbed me constantly.

The best time was between the evening and morning inspections, when no one came near my cell. I placed the table near the window, put the stool on top, stood on the stool, opened the window and gazed out at the evening sky and stars. I stayed that way all evening, in complete solitude, drinking tea now and then, knowing that nobody would come in till morning.

I tied the tea-kettle with a handkerchief to one of the window-bars. I measured the spaces between the bars, and found a place wide enough to put a glass through on to the narrow window-sill. It was tiring having to stand on the stool for long, and I thought of how I could make a suspended seat.

In the mornings, I pulled several fibres out of the lavatory mop and hid them under the mattress. I was now allowed out for half-hour exercises in the yard. I walked alone, under the watchful eyes of the guards and warders. Nevertheless, I seized a moment when they were inattentive to lift a stick I found a few yards from the path and stow it up my jacket. I noticed another piece of wood, about twenty inches long and five wide, but I could not get near it at the time because it lay far from the path, almost up against the prison wall.

I made a thick rope with loops at the ends out of the fibres, and I nibbled gradually at the stick until I was able to break it in two. The longer part I used for sitting on at night by the window, and the other part I used to fasten my "trapeze" to the iron bars. At night I spread my blanket on the stick, but it was still uncomfortable to sit on.

For a week or two I thought of how to get hold of the board near the wall, and after trying various ways, I finally got it and put it under my jacket. I had only just been brought back to my cell when the warder came in and announced that the procurator wanted to see me. Someone had noticed me from a window lifting the wood and had reported it. I was taken to the procurator's office where I was searched and the board taken from me. Then my cell was thoroughly inspected and the stick and rope confiscated.

On the following day I brought another piece of wood in from the exercise yard and again started to make a rope out of fibres. I made a trapeze for standing on during the day, and after the evening inspection, I suspended the blanket in the form of a hammock at the window with the aid of two short sticks and tightened loops round the ends of the blanket. Now I could look out at the heavens as much as I liked day and night. In the evenings I sat for hours in the hammock star-gazing and drinking tea. I was afraid of another search, but it did not take place.

I made a request to the chief to have books brought in from outside. The reply came back that this was prohibited by the procurator, but that I could borrow books from the prison library. The library contained nothing but monarchist drivel. I read a few of them and then gave up.

I got tired of being visited by the assistant procurator. I had told him right away that I would not testify and I repeated this at every interview. He was very polite, treated me as an equal, but, nevertheless, was a nuisance. The same questions over and over again: to admit that I had been a member of an illegal organization; to say who had given me the banner, who had taken part in the demonstration, etc. To stop his nagging, I said once that I would confess everything, but that I knew it would be useless because he would not believe me.

"Go on then," he said, his face lighting up.

I said that there were many people in the street, someone gave me the banner and I walked along with the oth-

ers. The soldiers had attacked us, hit me with their rifles, and put me in jail. There was no writing on the banner.

I smiled as I spoke, and he became very angry, but maintained his suavity. When I had finished, he remarked that a child would not believe my story, and that I must give testimony seriously. However, he wrote it all down, asked me to sign the statement, and stopped coming to see me afterwards.

I was pleased to get rid of at least one pest, but I was not left long in peace, as Osipov, the colonel of the gendarmes, decided to visit me. With a straight face I told him exactly the same story. He, too, wrote it all down, made me sign it, and departed.

After three months, I was transferred from my tower to another cell in the wood-built part of the prison. This section was surrounded by double palings of sharp-pointed logs. Here the prisoners were allowed to walk in the yard in groups almost the whole day and some of the cells were left open.

I met Mikhail Samylin here, and young students who had been arrested in the demonstration held on May 5 in Nizhny Novgorod, near the Alexandrovsky Gardens. We walked together in the yard, sang songs in the cells, and nobody tried to stop us. I made friends with some of the students—Sysin, Moiseyev, and Dertev, as well as with a handicraft joiner named Mikhailov, and others.

In September, we were transferred to the second floor of the main building. Samylin was put in with the Sormovo workers; and Mikhailov and I were lodged in a general cell with the students, Dertev and Georgievsky, a technical school student named Gusev, and Danilov, a student at the Gymnasium.

Maxim Gorky arranged for splendid dinners to be sent in to me.

An electric light burned all night in the cell. All the prisoners were let out in groups for exercise in the yard. We started an agitation among the guards, but only one lad responded. Some of the guards drove us from the windows, raising their rifles and threatening to shoot.

But when this young lad was on duty, we could climb up on the window and look out over the wall and across the fields.

The chief stopped making rounds of inspection, leaving this to two of his assistants. When they appeared in the mornings, we lay on in bed, paying no attention to the order to "stand up"; they could do nothing about it.

One day, warders began to shower blows on several of the Sormovo workers who refused to leave the corridor and go into their cells. The prisoners hammered on their cell doors, shouting, "Don't dare hit them." Our cell joined in the tumult. The infuriated warders threatened to shoot us with their revolvers through the spyholes of the doors.

We often sang songs in chorus without interruption. Through the wall from us, in the convict cell, there was another choir, but they sang mostly bawdy songs to religious tunes.

Then we were allowed to have books from outside. I was allowed to buy candles for reading. I used some of the tallow to cook eggs. An enamelled bowl served as a pan, which I put over the lighted tallow on a piece of tin. I had bent the corners of the tin to form supports, and in the centre I had dented a hollow for the tallow, which produced a flame hot enough to boil a bowl of water or milk or a couple of eggs. I got the flame going at first with a wick, but once started the tallow burned by itself.

One night three convicts escaped. They filed through the bars of their cell window on the ground floor, changed their clothes, and carrying dustbins, walked out of the gates past the guards who opened the gates for them and, in a way, helped them to escape. Discipline was more stringent after this incident; the guards kept us away from the windows, threatening us with their rifles.

### THE FIRST HUNGER-STRIKE

One night there was a terrific thunder-storm. I liked to watch these, so I stood for a long time at the window in my underclothes and caught a bad cold. Before



daylight, I had developed a high temperature and that morning our cell was asked to join in a hunger-strike with the aim of forcing the procurator to permit our relatives to visit us. We were entitled to this privilege by law, as the investigations into our cases were already over. We accepted the proposal and prepared for a long hunger-strike. It had been agreed that comrades who were taken ill must not resist being transferred to the hospital, and must eat there.

I suggested refusing to take either food or drink, but my comrades would not hear of it.

The Sormovo cell also agreed to join the hunger-strike. But I knew that there were people among them who were not sufficiently disciplined, and who had come to the First of May demonstration the worse for drink in spite of the decision of the Sormovo organization against this, and had tried to incite the marchers to smash up the factory. Therefore, I was afraid of a split in the strike, and as I considered myself responsible for the Sormovo people, I told the comrades that I would neither eat nor drink. They tried to talk me out of it, but I said that nothing would make me change my decision.

My fears were justified. Later, it was discovered that a police agent named Bogatyrev had been trying to break the hunger-strike. On the second day of the strike, five of the Sormovo prisoners began to take food surreptitiously, with the help of the habitual criminals who hid black bread for them in the lavatory stove.

As a result of the chill, my nose became stuffed up, and I could breathe only through my mouth. This made my thirst even more tormenting. Towards the evening of the first day, I lost my voice completely, and the back of my throat and mouth was parched and bleeding.

The chief warder came round for the evening inspection; when he looked at my throat he decided to call in the prison chief. On the way, the chief summoned the doctor, Domoradsky, and brought him to the cell. Both of them said that I must have drunk sulphuric acid for my throat to be in such a state. The comrades denied this, saying

that I was suffering from extreme thirst as I refused to drink anything, but the doctor and chief were unconvinced. They tried to get me to drink, because the doctor said that the ailment could give rise to ulcers and if that happened he could do nothing for me. I shook my head obstinately. The doctor was evidently a sympathetic man, and the chief, in spite of our previous arguments, was very disturbed. He did not shout at me or threaten me, but begged me, not as the prison chief, but as man to man, to drink something. This means of self-defence, usually employed by revolutionaries in prison, seemed to him to be unusually tragic. But I refused to give way.

I had a terrible night; I craved for water to quench my unbearable thirst; even to breathe scalded my throat and mouth, but now I could not retreat. I felt better in the morning as my temperature had gone down.

The Sormovo workers heard of my condition. First one, and then another called on me from the peep-hole to drink, but I shook my head stubbornly. I saw the pained expressions on their faces and was glad that by example was helping to raise their morale.

Another long, interminable day ended. It had turned cooler, but my temperature had risen again. Night came. I lay quietly on the planks, side by side with my sleeping comrades. I was in a state of semi-delirium. A painful death from thirst, so near to water, scared me as little as the easier and "glorious" death I had faced at the points of the soldiers' bayonets during the demonstration, or for that matter, the still easier death on the scaffold. I wanted only to win.

I recalled the words of Gorky's *Song of the Falcon*, the most beloved of all the songs I knew; I wanted to fall from the high heavens and shatter myself as the brave Falcon had done. I felt the joy of combat and revelled in it. It seemed that I, and those like me, would be victorious and lead others to victory. A long, tediously placid life, aimless, without the struggle for communism, was a mortifying, unendurable prospect—a life nothing better than a torpid, creeping death. Once again, as after the

talks with the Nevzorova sisters, I seemed to see the compact ranks of the world proletariat moving into battle, and hear almost distinctly the sound of their marching feet.

So the night passed. The morning brought me some ease; my temperature had gone down again. I was very weak, but during the day I managed to keep on my feet, and lay drowsing only now and then. In contrast with the night, everything looked better by day. The third night was full of nightmares; I was exhausted and alternated dozing and sleeping.

On the following day, two soldiers came into the cell and almost carried me out of the prison and into a horse-cab which took us to the hospital for convict-labour gangs.

The soldiers sat on each side of me holding me up. I wanted to tell them about our struggle, but my tongue would not obey me. They carried me in their arms to the second floor of the hospital and there the doctor gave me a cup of warm milk to drink. He would not let me eat, warning me that food would only aggravate my condition.

When the doctor went away, the convicts in the ward told me that someone was calling me from outside the window. I saw a young girl walking in the prison yard. She bent down low and waved a handkerchief quickly. I was not familiar with the alphabet of signs and understood nothing. One of the prisoners came over to "interpret" for me. He signalled what had happened to me and then told me that she wished to know what I wanted sent in, and I asked for tea and sugar.

At dinner-time I was given another cup of milk, but it tasted bad; I gave it to another prisoner and continued to do so all the time I was there.

Almost daily, the patients received charity food, especially *krendeli*.\* Doctor Domoradsky was careful about what I ate and particularly warned me against

\* A kind of knot-shaped biscuit.

eating *krendeli*. I assured him that I wanted only to drink and that I was not a child to throw my life away uselessly. He wrote out a line for me to receive a quarter of a pound of dry, white bread, and milk. I did not drink the milk, as it had an unpleasant, metallic taste. I enjoyed a glass of tea, which I sipped through small pieces of sugar, and I satisfied my hunger with some of the white bread.

After nine or ten days I left the hospital. Only one soldier went with me to the jail. We walked along Poleyaya Street. I asked him where he came from; he said he was a peasant from Podnovye village. I told him I had been born in Koshelyovka, which is separated from Podnovye only by the village of Pechory, and that my younger brother was in the army too. Along the whole way I explained to him what the socialist workers were fighting for. We were both engrossed in the conversation; he asked me questions and I answered them. We reached the prison gates without noticing the time passing.

The comrades there informed me that the hunger-strike had served its purpose and that visits were to be allowed. Some days later I was called out to the visiting-room. It was all the more pleasant to have visitors because we had won the right in struggle. Mother and sisters were waiting for me. Josephine Gasher had come, too, posing as my cousin. She was dressed in a padded jacket and a large shawl and, with her round pink face, looked like a peasant woman. With equal satisfaction I kissed them one by one; it was the first time in my life that I had ever kissed a woman who was not a relative. They were overjoyed that I had come through my illness and the hunger-strike so well.

## TRIAL AND SENTENCE

We got ready for our trial. I considered my part in it to be very important, and I was disappointed to learn that I was not to be tried separately, and that the charge against me was not that I had called for the overthrow of

the existing order, but that I had insolently censured the regime, the same charge proffered against the others who had taken part in the demonstration. This tied my hands and upset my plans.

A number of lawyers, retained by Maxim Gorky, arrived from Moscow. They were: Muravyov, Teslenko, Malyantovich and Maklakov. Some of us were summoned to the wood-built part of the prison building.

The lawyers explained that the judge would deprive us of the right to speak if we expressed sharp opposition to the government or the court. I resolved to write out my speech and read it over to the defending counsels.

Next day, Maklakov sent for me and I had a long talk with him. He told me that there was no exact article of the law making it a crime to carry a banner with the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" during a demonstration. There was a statute, he said, which carried the death penalty by hanging for publicly inciting an attempt upon the tsar's life, or for calling for the overthrow of the prevailing system, but it did not apply in my case. There was, however, Article 252, under which I would be tried, but this also, in his opinion, did not apply to me. Then he said that he was going to plead that I be charged under the statute which had only one punishment—death by hanging. As this could not possibly apply in my case, the judge would have no alternative but to discharge me.

One of the prisoners, a student named Rosenberg, wrote out a speech for me, but it was a scholarly treatise which would have been completely incomprehensible to working people. I made my own draft which appeared to me to be more understandable to workers.

I underrated the value of the court case. My past work seemed to me to be much more important than appearing in court on the sole charge of having dared to call the existing system in question. It would have been quite a different matter if I had been arraigned for calling publicly for the overthrow of the regime.

Of course, we would be able to use any "fearful" words we liked in the open court, but our speeches would be cut

short, and could not then be used for broad propaganda. The solicitude of the celebrated lawyers did not make me unmindful of the useful "lesson" I had so painfully learned from the example of the student Kuznetsov, and I put defence lawyers and judges in the same social group, and knew that defenders might easily become our judges and accusers.

I did not forget that we workers were only a means for them to realize their own ends. They wanted us to help them on to the "first rung of the ladder," but we wanted a revolution.

Maxim Gorky read the draft of my speech and approved it; it then became a model for the speeches of the other comrades.

I argued that those comrades against whom there was no direct evidence should be defended in court, since there was no point in increasing the number of victims as this would only weaken the Party. I had the greatest difficulty in persuading Mikhail Bykov to accept this advice.

The students and scholars among the prisoners were very fine people, but they were not bred of the working class, and the majority of them had what I considered to be, not revolutionary conviction, but an infantile sickness, a kind of students' "measles." The youngest, Lubotsky, was the son of a Jewish rabbi. He belonged to the most downtrodden race in tsarist Russia and for this reason was closer to the workers than any of the others. He was modest and clever; his sympathies with the revolutionary movement, in spite of his youth, were deeply rooted and sincere.

Sergei Moiseyev was the son of a nobleman; his elder brother, I was told, was an army officer. Moiseyev was something of an arch-revolutionary, and he tried to infect me with this malady. I made fun of his arch-revolutionary sermons by posing as a dyed-in-the-wool reactionary.

Moiseyev was very dissatisfied with the draft of my speech. He said it was not revolutionary, but conciliatory. He attacked me especially for the words: "I wished to call the attention of the government and the public to the

intolerable conditions of the workers." He was childish in many respects. I was greatly amused by his own appeal to the soldiers, which he had delivered through the grill of the barrack-room window. He had shouted, "Soldiers, they're making us work 12 hours a day, and we demand an 8-hour day." But in general Moiseyev was as playful and lively as a kitten. I liked him very much, though he had a tendency to be a bit supercilious in his attitude to us workers.

Among the students were two whom I thought to be sound revolutionary Marxists: Sysin and Dertev. But Lubotsky,\* and even Moiseyev and others, proved by their lives that their devotion to the cause of the international working class was not a passing fancy, and I have a warm, comradely feeling to all of them, to those who are still alive and to those who have left us.

A short while before the trial, I was transferred to the Sormovo workers' cell, where I was able to establish that the greater part of the Party members had not been picked up. I said nothing about the events following my arrest as I did not wish to dampen their spirits, and, in any case, I felt a bit ashamed of the poor display I had made during the beatings.

We discussed our tactics at the coming trial and agreed to adopt the lawyers' advice and avoid making violent attacks on the court and the government. This would enable us to make our speeches, however short, which could be used outside for propaganda among the workers. Besides this, I wanted to keep the Party out of it as much as possible, so as to fulfill our main task of maintaining the organization intact.

\* Vladimir Mikhailovich Lubotsky (Party pseudonym—Zagorsky) became a prominent Party worker. At the 1902 trial he was sentenced to life exile in the Yenisei Province, escaped from there in 1904 and became a professional Party worker. After the October Revolution, V. M. Zagorsky worked in the Soviet Embassy in Germany, and later in the Moscow Committee of the Party. He was killed in 1919 by a bomb which the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries threw into the building of the Moscow Committee of the Party.

There was a blacksmith named Lyapin among us. He had not been a member of the Party, but was arrested nevertheless. We asked him not to speak because we were sure he would be acquitted. But the judges thought otherwise and sentenced him to life exile, while at the same time letting off other, more valuable comrades who proved their worth later.

I had never been in court before, never seen a judge, and had no idea what the trial would be like. Therefore, the lawyer Maklakov's statement that the judges did not want to apply the statute containing the death penalty to my case was a welcome one. I thought that the judges must have some humanity in them, some grain of sympathy, either that or they were cowards and afraid of public opinion.

The simplest and easiest course for me would have been to speak openly, boldly, and in a sharply hostile manner. But I knew that this would worsen the position of the other comrades at the trial, and, moreover, I was convinced that the judges would simply deprive me of the right to speak and have me removed from the courtroom. I thought it necessary to show in my speech the essence of the workers' struggle against the capitalists, even if I did this in the mildest terms, so that I should not be silenced as soon as I opened my mouth.

Another lawyer from Nizhny Novgorod called on me for an interview. When I showed him my speech he was satisfied with it. During the talk, it became plain that the defence lawyers wished to express through our speeches in court what they themselves would have dared to say only in family circles.

The Sormovo case was to be the first and the trial was appointed for the end of October or the beginning of November. We were led out during the night, taken away by tram-car and put up in a very fine room with iron beds. In the morning, they brought us tea and white bread, and for dinner we had appetizing meat soup, the like of which I had never tasted in my life before. We were guarded by soldiers.



The assistant procurator came to see us. He was very kind and polite and asked us if we were content with our food and accommodation. I replied that the food and the room were very good, but that to me freedom was more precious, and that if I had to stay much longer there, I would hang myself by my shoe-laces. He had obviously expected us to be grateful, and was so taken aback that he went off at once.

On the following day, we were led out of the room and into the court-room where we were seated upon benches fenced off with an iron grill. The first thing we saw was the judges' bench, where the judges sat in their uniforms overlaid with gold, their florid faces and necks appearing hostile and strange to us. Not knowing anything about court procedure, I thought for a minute of getting up and explaining the reasons why I had been on the demonstration with a banner calling for the overthrow of the autocracy.

As I expected, the judges called on me first. Popov, the president of the court, began to ask me questions, but I did not answer them and went on to make my speech. Popov interrupted me, demanding that I answer questions only, and putting me off my stride. I lost my temper and began my speech again from the beginning. He again interrupted me and insisted that what I was saying was irrelevant, that I had only to answer questions and keep my replies short. I did not know that I had the right to make a closing speech, and demanded that he stop interrupting me.

I told the court that I wished to explain why I had taken part in the demonstration, and asked for permission to make my statement. "You judges ought to be interested in my explanation," I said.

Maklakov then came to my assistance and pleaded that I be conceded the right to tell the truth. The president yielded, and apart from interrupting me twice again with the remark: "That is irrelevant," allowed me to read my speech to the end.

The usual court procedure was disrupted. I won the attention of the judges and the court-room. I was greatly agitated myself by my speech and felt the effect of the strain of the previous few weeks. The sense of injustice for myself, and for thousands of others like me, became so overwhelming that I could not control my tears. From time to time the words stuck in my throat, so that I could not go on and had to summon up new strength and will-power to propound the truth that the judges had tried to wave aside.

The lean and nervous lawyer, Maklakov, was crying. I noticed that the president of the court was also affected. And when I related the unhappy life of the old workers, and told them about my grandfather who had been bullied even by his own children, the president could scarcely control himself and his lower lip was quivering.

I spoke for an hour. With a kindly smile on his face, one of the judges, Milyutin, came over to me till there was only the iron barrier between us. His head was on a level with my chest and he looked at me so tenderly that one would have thought he wanted to kiss me. He asked me questions and I replied.

"Did you shout the words: 'Down with the Autocracy?'"

"No, I didn't. But I did more than that. I carried a banner with the slogan: 'Down with the Autocracy!' And I held it in such a way that every worker could read it. And in fact they all did."

"What is your attitude to the tsar?"

"If the Russian tsar had no power," I answered, "and government was in the hands of the elected representatives of the people, then I would have nothing against the tsar."

Milyutin went back to his place still beaming.

Mikhail Samylin was called next. The president of the court permitted him to make a short speech and gave the same right to Bykov and Naumov. Then came the examination of the witnesses. The case for the prosecution was based on reports from gendarmes, police and police

agents. The agents invariably began their reports with the words: "I was on observation duty at the corner. . . ."

After the witnesses had been heard, Kurlov, the counsel for the prosecution, made a long speech. When he came to the part concerning myself, he said that "it was very difficult not only for the workers to live, but for us also, and we have to put up with it." This was not only the most unexpected, but also the most interesting part of Kurlov's speech. It was laughable that under tsarism even prosecutors found that life was not a bed of roses.

Following Kurlov, our lawyer, Maklakov, took the floor. He defended Bykov and Samylin, showing the judges that the charges against them were not covered by statute, and then he went on to examine the case against me. He told the court that there was no exact article of the law making it punishable to carry a banner with the slogan: "Down with the Autocracy!" and that the only article of the law under which I could be tried was one carrying the death penalty by hanging for calling publicly for the overthrow of the existing order.

"It would be more correct to apply the law under which my client Zalomov would suffer the death penalty," he said, "but this law, which is the most appropriate one, is, nevertheless, inexact." And he quoted the Senate's verdict in the case of Bogolyubov.\*

Muravyov, counsel for the defence, in his speech said very little about me personally, and was mainly concerned with reproaching the prosecutor for having tried to throw doubts upon the sincerity of my statement, in which I had said that I had decided to sacrifice my life for the working class.

"I'm really surprised," said Muravyov to the judges, "how the prosecuting counsel can remain impervious to the accused Zalomov's confession of faith. He does not

\* A. P. Bogolyubov (1852-1892) — the pseudonym of the worker A. A. Yemelyanov, a Narodnik propagandist who was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for his part in the Kazanskaya demonstration in Petersburg in 1876, the first political demonstration of the Russian working class.

believe that Zalomov joined the demonstration for the good of the workers, and by this he displays what is tantamount to a denial of the evangelical precept glorifying 'he who lays down his life for a friend.'"

Kurlov's face turned red.

We were accorded the right to make a final statement, but it was entirely unexpected for me, and I, and the others after me, declined to speak. The judges retired to consider their verdict. When they returned we were sentenced to life exile in Eastern Siberia, with loss of all property rights. The list of the sentenced included, besides myself, M. Samylin, A. Bykov, P. Druzhkin, and Frolov, who were all members of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, and the blacksmith Lyapin, a non-member. When Lyapin heard his name read out he let out an inarticulate cry and threw himself against the iron bars. Our lawyers gathered round him and tried to quieten him, and he allowed himself to be led into the room set aside for the prisoners. He was indignant at his sentence and regretted not having taken the opportunity of venting his anger on the judges.

I had expected Samylin to have made a longer speech than he did in the court. I asked him, "Why did you say so little, Mikhail?" He answered, "You said all that was necessary; there was no point in me making a long speech."

Pyotr Druzhkin was very upset. Mikhail Bykov wept because he had not been sentenced with us and was sorry that he had submitted to our request not to speak against the autocracy, the court, and the judges. I told him that the interests of the struggle demanded the preservation of the Party, and not that each single member be exiled or sent to hard labour. He quietened down, and we said farewell to him for ever. I knew how he felt as, during the mass arrests in 1896, I had gone through something similar.

All the comrades without exception took the sentences unflinchingly. Lyapin's one regret was that he had not been a member of the Party before the trial and had not

made a speech in court. With venom, he repeated, "I would have told them something!" Actually the sentences were ridiculous, particularly in my own case. Under Article 252 we might well have been given six years hard labour. Instead we had life exile with the loss of property rights.

After the trial we were taken by night to the prison. Soon afterwards I received a note from outside asking me to write out a copy of my speech and have it sent out. I had not kept to the text of my written speech in all details as I had taken advantage of the weakness of the president of the court and given it a more definite tone. It was a long speech and difficult to reproduce. I asked Samylin's advice, and then wrote out a short summary, knowing that the comrades outside had the first draft and could use both. Samylin and Frolov agreed that the summary contained the most important and essential points of my speech in court. Then I had it sent outside.

Next on trial were the student youth. The younger ones refused to go to court and soldiers had to take them there by force.

After the trial I summed up the results of the Sormovo demonstration. Only five members of the Party and one non-member had been sent to exile for life. The sacrifice seemed to me to be insignificant and I felt happy about it. But my happiness was spoiled—my conscience troubled me. I remembered the bitter, but courageous words of the Decembrist Muravyov-Apostol, when the rope broke as he was being hanged. "Poor Russia," he said, "they can't even hang people properly."

I recalled the members of "People's Will" who had put the tsar to death and had paid for this with their lives, and in that minute I regretted, not the "glorious" death which I might have had on the soldiers' bayonets, but the ignominious death on the gallows which the judges had denied me.

It seemed to me that if I had been sentenced to death this would have served the revolution more than all my past and future life. The workers, my comrades, would

never have forgotten nor forgiven my death, just as I myself neither forgot nor forgave the death of all who had fallen in the struggle with the oppressors of the working people.

Like every other revolutionary worker, I had wanted to do the maximum for the cause of the revolution, and here I had let slip an opportunity that would never be repeated. Do I have to say that these were erroneous thoughts? But I understood this only later in the remote and grim exile.

We met the young students, condemned for taking part in the Nizhny Novgorod demonstration on May 5, on the train carrying us off to the Moscow Butyrskaya transit prison. We left, singing, as cheerful as victors.\*

\* P. A. Zalomov's *Recollections* were first published in Kursk in 1939.

As Zalomov described events from memory he committed a few minor inaccuracies. It is a matter of record that the hunger-strike was not intended as a means of getting the procurator to let relatives visit them, but as a protest against searching the prisoners after a visit. Second, Zalomov was in hospital from Sept. 25 or 26 to Sept. 30, and not "nine or ten days." Third, the prisoners put in applications for defence counsel on Sept. 29 and 30. They had an interview with their lawyers on Oct. 26. The trial began on Oct. 28 and ended on the following day.—*Ed.*

## THE STORY OF MY LIFE\*

I was born in the year 1849. We lived in a tumbledown cottage in the Koshelyovka settlement, near Nizhny Novgorod. Like thousands of others, we lived in poverty.

I'd boil some buckwheat gruel and put it on the table and the children would eat it all up and were still hungry. It made my heart ache to watch them, and I could only cry. I started sewing in the evenings, but we never had enough money. Grandfather went round begging, and my sons were little more than children when they started to work in the Kurbatov factory, where they laboured from morning till night.

All my life, from my childhood days, I wished for nothing so much as to study and learn.

But instead, as a little girl, I had to sit crocheting lace. After many appeals Mother taught me the alphabet and syllables. With great trouble I learned to read. We had no books at home as none of us could read. I hardly ever saw a piece of printed paper, except when the shopkeeper wrapped soap or candles in the leaf of a book. I kept the sorry-looking bits of paper and read them over and over again.

They were my first textbooks.

In that far-off past, I was often at the Kashirins' house. I remember seeing Maxim Gorky there when he was a child. He was always reading a book. I could see then that he was smart and would grow up to be clever.

I knew Gorky through his mother's side of the family; she was older than me.

\* The following is a record of what A. K. Zalomova (1849-1938) told the Sevkabel Plant and Uritsky Tobacco Factory workers in Leningrad in 1935.

Kashirin, Gorky's grandfather, was godfather to my mother, and my mother was godmother to Varvara Vasilyevna, Gorky's mother.

So it seems that I am a distant relation of Gorky's.\*

I first read his story *Mother* in the years of the first imperialist war and several times since. People ask me: were you really like that? I don't know, there were many mothers like me at that time, but my son was just as Gorky described him. All who remember his work know this to be true.

Gorky's story is a true story. It tells how mothers must act when they have the cause of their children, justice and the working people at heart. How alive Gorky remains in my memory, so kind and sympathetic. My son Pyotr knew him well.

Pyotr took up politics at the age of fifteen. And when he was older, he studied in the circle taught by the Nevzorova sisters. When Pyotr was arrested and exiled, Gorky helped him and his comrades with money. When Pyotr was in exile he received fifteen rubles a month from Gorky, and during his imprisonment in Nizhny Novgorod, Gorky sent him in dinners. I cannot remember this myself, but I have been told that Gorky once put up a Christmas-tree for the children of the poor. My daughter, Varvara, said she was there, and that Gorky and some students went round the needy homes collecting the children.

He lived in Kanatnaya Street at the time.

How hard and cheerless was the life of the workers.

My husband, Andrei, worked in the Kurbatov factory from the age of fourteen. Only the old people remember what work in that factory was like in those days.

The working day was from five in the morning till

\* Anna Kirillovna was not mistaken. When studying the documents relating to the Kashirins, Gorky's predecessors on his mother's side, N. A. Zaburdayev of the Gorky Literary Museum in the town of Gorky established that Anna Kirillovna's mother, Alexandra Yakovlevna Gavryushova, was second cousin to Gorky's grandfather, Vasily Vasilyevich Kashirin.



eight in the evening. Andrei gave his whole life to the blood-sucking Kurbatov.

He worked in the copper-smelting shop in harmful conditions. When he came in from work, his face was black and his eyes inflamed.

"Get me some vodka, Mother," he would say.

But where would I get vodka when there was scarcely a crust of bread on the table.

That was his life. Six long days in the factory, then drinking in the tavern from Saturday night.

He died at the age of thirty-nine from gas-poisoning. The sorrows of my life were so many that I had no tears left to shed. Somebody laid Andrei's hands on his breast. Candles were lighted. I remembered nothing. My seven orphans watched piteously.

From that day on I had to fend for my children. I sewed and washed, went out as a daily cleaner, working from morning till late in the night, but the children still did not have enough to eat; they never had a full meal.

My husband's grandfather, Andrei Zalomov, had been a serf. Driven to desperation by beatings he had fled from his owner. He went into the military station and volunteered for the army. In those days enlisting was just as bad as hard labour for life. For thirty years he "pacified" the Caucasus. For thirty years he served obediently, getting his face punched by the officers. At the end of this hard labour, an old invalid, he came back to his native town and got a job as a night-watchman in the Kurbatov factory.

When I looked back at his life, I thought: is ours any better? No, it's more bitter, harder to bear, more hateful. Such was the fate of the Zalomov family—even worse than the worst hard labour.

After my husband's death, the factory gave me a pension, but stopped it in the third year. "Look, woman," they said, "your sons have grown up, they'll work for you." And the biggest was only in his teens.

I hated to give Pyotr to the factory where his father

had been worked to death, but there was nothing else for it. And there he was, a fifteen-year-old boy, harnessed to work day and night. He went off in the early morning, and got home late at night. The work wore him down so much that he even wanted to lay hands on himself. And what could I do? Pyotr understood. When I cried, he stroked my head and said, "Just wait, I'll soon be getting more pay and we'll live better."

Later he got work as a fitter in the Sormovo works. When I knew that he had joined the revolutionaries, I didn't plead much with him, I knew he would not be dissuaded. I saw his enthusiasm and how he was devoting himself to the workers' cause. Secretly I said to myself: "My Pyotr will never do anything bad; now he has taken up the cause, I shall have to help him."

I remember offering to take leaflets to Ivanovo-Voznesensk. "If they catch you," he told me, "tell them I sent you." "No," I thought, "they won't catch me, I'll have a nap on my suitcase, and they'll never think of asking auntie what she has in there." I sat down in the station and closed my eyes as if I were dozing, but my heart was beating fast.

Along came a gendarme. He stopped and looked. "Now, I'm in for it, he'll grab me." I screwed up my courage and asked him, "Will the train be soon?" He just tugged his beard and walked away. "He hasn't a dog's nose, anyway," I said to myself, "he can't smell." And in Ivanovo they were waiting impatiently for the suitcase and greeted me like a long-lost relative.

And then I carried leaflets in a bucket from Pechory to Sormovo. I put them at the bottom, covered them with sauerkraut, hung the bucket over my shoulder and off I went. In the train, people asked me, "Where are you going with the cabbage? Haven't we enough of it in Sormovo?"

And I replied, "You haven't got cabbage like this in Sormovo. This is something special."

I remember the year 1902. I had to bring in the May Day banners from the town to Sormovo. Pyotr asked me

to fetch them. It wasn't easy; the gendarmes were searching nearly everyone on the train.

I went to the house of a member of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee. \*

"There, Anna, can you manage to take these to Sormovo?"

He put the banners down and turned away about his business.

I thought and thought, and decided to wrap them round me. I did so and buttoned myself up again. It was all right, only I looked as fat as can be.

"Good-bye, comrade," I said.

He turned round and, seeing that I had nothing in my hands, said:

"And where are the banners?"

I told him. He praised me and I went off to catch the train.

People looked at me in the train and whispered to each other: "See that fat old woman sweating."

I sat mum. The banners arrived safely. Shortly afterwards my son Pyotr carried one in front of all the others.

He and his comrades made great preparations for the demonstration. Almost six thousand people had gathered, such a lot of people. The marchers came along singing their songs and looking out for the gendarmes. They came along the Sormovo highroad, the crowds getting bigger and bigger. The people hated the tsar and sympathized with the demonstration. They also took up the singing.

Alexei Baranov, who was carrying the second banner, walked side by side with Pyotr. Suddenly soldiers appeared from somewhere. Shooting started and the banner was snatched out of Pyotr's hands. The gendarmes began to lash the people with their whips. They kicked Pyotr till he lost consciousness. They dragged my dear boy off to prison. He spat up blood for a long time.

\* Anna Kirillovna is speaking about Ladyzhnikov.

Next day my neighbours, foolish, ignorant people, said to me, "Did you hear that a robber with a banner was bayoneted? They say his guts fell out." "No," I said, "it's not true. His guts didn't fall out, and he's not a robber, he's a good man."

"And who is he then?" they asked. I could not hold back and said, "He's not a robber, he's my son, Pyotr." And they ran from me as if I had the plague. They did not understand; they thought Pyotr was the devil.

So they put Pyotr in jail. Many of his comrades were arrested too. The police searched our house, but of course they found nothing. I was very worried and kept going to the jail to ask about him. He was tried in the court first, then they put him in prison, but they would not let visitors in. He demanded to meet his relatives and went on a hunger-strike.\* His comrades only refused to eat, but my Pyotr refused to drink as well. He was very stubborn. He let nothing pass his lips for seven days. He was as good as dead when they took him to the hospital.

I went again to the jail. The guard said to me:

"You're wasting your time. Your son is in hospital; maybe you won't see him alive again."

I wept and pleaded with them to let me see my son.

"I must see him before he dies, so that I can close his eyes for the last time. That's a mother's right."

I pestered every official and guard I could find to ask to see my son. Finally they let me in. It was a great joy to see him again. He had changed a lot, grown a beard, he was like an old man, and was thin and pale.

After the trial he was sent to exile in Siberia, to the Yenisei Province.

My son Pyotr suffered much torment in fighting the tsarist police, but his cause triumphed. The working people threw off the chains of the tsar, the priests and the capitalists.

\* Anna Kirillovna's story is a bit mixed here. The hunger-strike took place before the trial.

Now I live in Gorky with my daughter. I have a new house and a pension. I am happy in the new life which the people have had from the Revolution.

I am proud that the work of my sons and daughters was not in vain and that they saw their dreams come true.

I have seen it for myself and can scarcely believe it. How everything has changed! How good life is today! Now I never think of death. I have lived almost ninety years and I have forty-three kinsfolk: sons, daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and I am so happy that I never want to die.

I'll live till I'm a hundred! Blind and deaf, but I'll live. I want to know what life will be like then.

I'm sitting now drinking tea and talking. My children and grandchildren are round the table with me.

I am surrounded by my own people. No matter where I look, or to which town I go, my grandchildren and great-grandchildren are there. And they're all so strong and healthy, everyone working and studying, all helping to build the new life. They are nearly all Stakhanovites, Communists, Y.C.L. members and Pioneers.

I had seven children. Now I have eighteen grandchildren and about the same number of great-grandchildren. Soon, they tell me, there will be another little one. That will be forty-four in our family.

Don't you think I'm a happy old woman, having lived to see these times, when all the people in our country are equal, when there is not the degrading contempt towards the working people that we had in the old days?

Life becomes more beautiful every day. Could I have dreamed of one day becoming a professor? Yet my granddaughter, Lolya, Pyotr's girl, is teaching Party history in the workers' faculty. Could I have thought of ever having a motor-car? Now, my grandson Pyotr, Olya's boy, is an important man in the auto works in Gorky, managing the conveyor. He was sent abroad to study and the government gave him a car for a present.

He doesn't forget me; sometimes he takes me round Gorky in his car.

I'm told that another of my grandsons is chief of a radio-station in Kamchatka. That's a good bit away, but he remembers me too and once in a while sends me a telegram.

Varya's boy is in the army, and there's another of the boys in the navy, sailing the Arctic Ocean to different countries.

So now my life is different. And the sunshine warms my old bones.

Dear comrades, you who are young and strong, you have the happiness for which thousands of revolutionaries perished in exile, died in prison, or fell under the bullets of the gendarmes.

Defend Soviet power. Stand firmly for the workers' cause. And today, with all the pride of a mother's heart, I say to you: that banner which my son Pyotr carried has never been taken down. Under that banner we went from victory to victory, and I believe with all my heart that it will take us forward to triumphant communism.

## OUR FAMILY

### THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

My mother, Anna Kirillovna Zalomova, told me many times about her childhood, her youth and her married life.

She was born in 1849 into the family of a shoemaker, Gavryushov. While she was still a child, she was sent to stay with her aunt in the town of Balakhna, where she lived till she was nine.

She was very anxious to learn to read. But there was no free education in those days, and the shoemaker could not afford to send her to school.

Grandmother taught her to read. Maximych, an assistant doctor who lived with them, helped with her education. Mother was then thirteen or fourteen years old. Maximych belonged to the Narodniks, and, as Mother said, he had a big influence on her development. He passed to her his love for books.

She read secretly as she was crocheting lace.

On two occasions she was able to hear operas through a barman she knew. But Grandmother would not let her go again to the opera. "It's not a good thing for a girl," she said.

My grandfather on my father's side, Zalomov, like Gavryushov, my mother's father, was a shoemaker, and worked for an employer getting barely enough to live on. The family kept increasing, but the income remained the same. All the children had to start work early in life.

One of his sons, Andrei Zalomov, my father, began to earn a high wage only when he was twenty-one. He

worked in the Kurbatov factory for a ruble a day. This ruble played a big part in deciding my mother's marriage. Her parents said that she would never get a better husband than Andrei Zalomov, and that there was no point in waiting.

At that time Andrei Zalomov lived with his father in the Koshelyovka settlement, near the Pechory monastery, in an old, dilapidated hut. There were eight in the family; Mother was the ninth. She was completely unlike the Zalomovs in learning. They used to laugh at her and called her "Our educated daughter-in-law." Mother lived with the Zalomovs for seven years and saw and suffered much there.

Once, when she was pregnant, she was sent down to the cellar to bring up some kvass. The whole Zalomov household was in a state of disorder, including the cellar. Instead of having a ladder down to the cellar, there was a tub with a box on top. Mother started to climb down, the box jerked from under her and she tumbled down into the tub and stuck there until someone came to look for her. They had waited a long time for the kvass and were annoyed with her.

"What's happened to you?"

"Call Andrei, I can't get up."

They laughed for hours afterwards; it did not occur to them to be sorry for her. Such were the vulgarities of those days.

Soon after this, Mother gave birth to Olya, the third daughter. Grandmother, who was generally a kind woman, grumbled, "She's going to give you a hutful of girls, Andrei, what are you going to do?" Father got angry. His brothers scoffingly supported Grandmother. They began to argue, a fight started and it ended up with one of the brothers hitting Father with the bar of a door.

Father was ill for three months afterwards. When he recovered he took his family out of Koshelyovka and went to stay with Mother's sister in the upper part of Nizhny Novgorod. The house stood, and still stands, in Staraya Sennaya Square, almost at the very end of the Otkos, the



steep bank of the Volga. The rest of the children including Pyotr were born in this house; I was born there too, in 1884.

According to Mother, this was the worst time the family ever went through. Father was ill, and I was the seventh child. We all lived in one room; the children slept on the floor. Often when Father was leaving for work, he would look at the sleeping children and say dispiritedly to Mother, "Anna, I know I'll never see them grown-up."

I was only two months old when Father died. He was still young, thirty-nine years, but he had been poisoned by gas-fumes in the copper-smelting shop where he worked. Heavy and harmful work, a twelve-hour working day had brought him to an early grave.

Mother told me of the many, many times she shed bitter tears as she clasped me to her breast. Those around her, relatives and neighbours, pitied her and said, "If only the good Lord would take the little one, Anna." But we children did not die. We knew nothing of the terrible burden that had fallen on our family. The older children were very kind to the little ones. Sometimes they would take their scanty share of the sugar and give it to me or to Anastasia.

After my father's death the relatives wanted to put the three smaller children into an orphanage. But Mother received a niggardly pension from the factory where Father had worked for twenty-five years, and would not part with any of her children.

She worked endlessly, never lifting her head. She taught the three older sisters to sew; the two brothers were still too young to work.

### THE WIDOWS' HOME

I was four years old when the family moved into the Widows' Home. The Home had been built by a wealthy Nizhny Novgorod townsman named Bugrov. Only widows with large families were accepted into the Home.

After great difficulty Mother managed to get a room there.

The manager of the Home, who had been appointed by Bugrov, was Alexander Osipovich (I've forgotten his full name). He had complete control and enriched himself as much as he liked. Those widows who would not give him a bribe were either refused accommodation or given the worst rooms. Mother had nothing to give him, so our family got a room in the basement. The windows were high up under the ceiling and the floor was asphalted. The room was dreary and cold in the winter.

My sister and I could not get used to the noise and the racket, the swearing and fighting that went on among the widows, or to the long gloomy corridors. There were two hundred and fifty families in the Home, with more than a thousand children. Here the peculiar life of a government charitable institution flowed on. The smaller children had to gather in the hall every morning and evening where a supervisor taught them to sing hymns. I shall always remember Mother bent over her sewing. Usually she moved a large trunk over to the window, put a table on it with the sewing machine on top and she and Alexandra worked there till late in the evening.

Yelizaveta, my oldest sister, did not live with us then; she married Grigory Garinov, a joiner by trade, and they had a place of their own. The third sister, Olya, was in service as a children's nurse.

We were badly fed and never had anything nice to eat. My sister Anastasia and I used to roam round under windows picking up rinds of lemon and cheese. We rubbed the dirt off and ate them with relish. We were always poorly dressed. Alexandra was often in tears putting endless patches on the children's clothes and linen.

Pyotr had to go to school in Father's old cap which was too large for him. My brother Alexander and my sister Anastasia attended a school in the Home. This saved Mother the expense of boots and outer clothing for them.

There were many rules in the Widows' Home that made life very uncomfortable. The worst rule was that

forbidding boys of fourteen and over from living in the Home. When Pyotr turned fourteen, Mother had to send him to live with Grandmother. Not long afterwards he began work in the factory where my father had been employed. Mother's pension stopped because she now had a "bread-winner," and this "bread-winner" was paid twenty kopeks a day.

Mother found the Home more and more impossible to live in. Alexander was nearly fourteen and there was no place for him to go, so we all went to live in Koshelyovka, in a ruin of a house which had belonged to my father.

### IN KOSHELYOVKA

The house stood near the Pechory monastery on the edge of the town. Once again we were living on the banks of the Volga. The houses were on a steep hill, which was buried in verdure in the summer. But we children were more attracted by the Volga. The spring floods brought the river nearer and we played in it the whole day long.

We were able to breathe more freely after leaving the basement in the Widows' Home. Our room was still very small (not more than ten square metres). Even yet I wonder how six of us managed in it.

Olya got married before we left for Koshelyovka; Pyotr had begun to earn more wages. Alexander started to work in one of the many handicraft workshops in Koshelyovka making cigarette-tubes. Things became easier at home. But this was not the most important change. Pyotr had joined the revolutionaries, and a fresh, cheering spirit seemed to come into our lives.

Learning the great teachings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels made Pyotr into a new man. The time was past when he used to pull us unmercifully by the ears; he became more attentive and kind to us and no longer slapped us for our childish faults. He was even-tempered and respectful to Mother. In training himself to fight for the great cause of the people he tried to educate us

younger children in the same way. He always kept his word in everything he did.

Pyotr was more of a father to us than a brother. We children adored him and believed in him without end. Often he brought us interesting books which we read eagerly. Books became a constant part of our life.

One spring, during Easter-week, Pyotr took me to the Nikolayevsky Theatre.\* On our way back, we went along the Otkos, the high bank of the Volga where the townsfolk usually took their walks.

Our clothes were shabby and we contrasted sharply with the fashionably dressed bourgeois public. I was ashamed and asked Pyotr to go into another street which was quiet and deserted. But he took me firmly by the hand, and on we walked, giving way to nobody on the road, and when he saw the highly indignant looks of the passers-by, he grinned broadly. This was how he taught me not to be ashamed of poor clothes. These were the years 1898-99.

We often had visitors who were obviously not workers. V. A. Desnitsky and V. A. Vaneyev came oftener than others. They sat together with my brother on benches and talked quietly. Anastasia and I soon learned what the talk was about and who the people were. They brought literature which Pyotr kept secretly. He gave the books to workers, read them himself and gave them to us to read.

The spring of 1896 was an anxious time for all of us because of Pyotr. We were sitting at home once when a neighbour knocked suddenly on the window and shouted maliciously, "Your son has been arrested, they've got him at last." But it was not true, Pyotr came home; he had only been asked to the police station for questioning, but his comrades Samylin and the Zamoshnikovs had been arrested.

After we flitted to Koshelyovka, Mother, besides sewing, took work as a midwife. She had got a complete text-

\* A newly built town theatre at that time, now the State Theatre in the town of Gorky.

book on midwifery from her friend, an assistant doctor, and had studied it diligently. At first she had gone with Grandmother for practice and later delivered independently. We were often disturbed during the night and Mother had to go quickly to a confinement; sometimes she was not home for weeks on end.

Everyone in the settlement knew Mother and the women loved her as a relative. She taught them how to care for themselves and their infants and lectured many a drunken husband for disturbing the woman shortly after the confinement. The children loved her as their own mother for her kindness and the stories she told them.

All the drudgery in the confined mothers' homes lay on her shoulders, and she was paid for it in kopeks. But she never refused to help anyone at any time. When she was out I took on the housekeeping. I kept the stove going, made my brothers' dinners and was always covered with soot; Pyotr called me "Cinderella."

Then Anastasia went into service. She worked for a whole year as a children's nurse. Then Mother got her a job in a small workshop. More than once the owner hit her and pulled her hair, but she didn't complain to Mother about it. One time Mother went to fetch her home and found her in tears; the owner had just beaten her. Mother took her away at once and found her other work.

Mother also found employment for me in a small workshop in a basement. We worked from six in the morning till midnight with a short break in between. Besides sewing, we learners had to do the dirty work in the place. After the free life at home, on the banks of the Volga, I felt as if I were in a hard labour prison. My eyes ached terribly and at night I could not see to thread the needle.

The owner had promised Mother that I would have one day's leave every month so as to get home, but I worked for three months without a leave. I pined for home, for the Volga, and waited impatiently for the happy day when I could go home. But every time it came round, the owner said coldly, "You can't go home today. You'll have to finish that work. I'll let you off next Sunday."

Finally, after hearing this reply again, I went behind the door to my corner, took my things, and went home without permission. I went to the Otkos and looked at the Volga to my heart's content. Mother reproached me for coming home without permission, but Pyotr stood up for me. He persuaded Mother to take me to an eye-specialist to find out whether there was really something wrong with my eyes—this was the explanation I had given to Mother for leaving work. The doctor said that my eyes were overstrained and I stayed home temporarily.

I was then fifteen, and not once had I thought of my future. I did not wish to go back to the workshop and girls were not employed in the factory. There was only one way out—I decided to get an elementary education, and then take up training as a midwife.

I spoke to Pyotr about it; he took it seriously and promised to help me. Some days later, he came home and said joyfully, "Well, Varvara, I've fixed it. Here is a teacher's address. Go there tomorrow and she'll prepare you for the exams." So a new period in my life began.

My teacher, Olga Petrovna Ivanitskaya, was young, slender and pretty, and she fascinated me. My studies brought me still closer to Pyotr. He had a great respect for Olga and listened willingly to what I had to say about her. She was a member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

Later, Olga Ivanitskaya sent me to another teacher, Maria Tikhomirova. She lived in Kanatnaya Street, opposite to the Lemke house where Maxim Gorky was staying at the time. While I was waiting for Maria, I often saw Maxim Gorky through the window opposite as he was bent over his work. Sometimes I met him in the street.

Olga and Maria persuaded me to continue my studies and go on to the Gymnasium, promising to give me every help. In the autumn, Maria passed me on to another teacher. During the year of preparing for the Gymnasium I went through the hands of five teachers. Final-

ly I came back to Olga. Her older sister, Maria Ivanitskaya, had just returned from abroad. We met each other very often afterwards.

As no one paid any attention to such an inconspicuous young girl as I was, Pyotr began to give me some simple Party tasks to do and I did them with great willingness. In carrying out this work, I became friendly with many of the comrades and knew the addresses of many of the Party members. I liked particularly to be sent to Olga Chachina. She was chief librarian in the Vsesoslovny (Public) Club. I went there often and browsed through the books till closing time. I passed my exams in 1900, and enrolled in the fourth class in the Mariinskaya Gymnasium.

For the first time in my life I wore a hat and galoshes. Now when I walked through the settlement, the boys threw stones and dirt at me, and the grown-ups jeered, "So the beggar girl is going to be a lady." I was the first girl from Koshelyovka to enter the Gymnasium, but others followed my example later.

### ON THE EVE OF BIG EVENTS

By the years 1900-01, every member of our family was taking part in the revolutionary movement. My three sisters' husbands were members of the Party. They each worked in different factories, and it was through them that the Social-Democratic organization kept contact with the workers. The large meetings, in which all the leading Nizhny Novgorod and Sormovo Party members took part, were held in my sister Alexandra's flat. She was married to A. D. Pavlov,\* and they lived in Telyachya Street in Nizhny Novgorod.

Alexandra kept a supply of illegal literature in her flat. She brought it from the railway station wrapped in bast matting, put it on a sledge and pulled it home along the middle of the street. The last thing anyone would have

\* Not to be confused with the family of D. A. Pavlov from Sormovo—this is another Pavlov.

thought from her outward appearance was that she was a revolutionary. I often went to see her, to get literature for Sormovo and Pechory. My sister, Yelizaveta, and her husband, Grigory Garinov,\* lived in Sormovo. Grigory was an active member of the Sormovo section of the R.S.D.L.P. and had been working there since 1897.

He spent a great deal of effort in wresting the Sormovo cooperative society from the hands of the works management, a fight which ended in victory for the workers. At the shareholders' meeting a board was elected exclusively from workers and included several Party members—Grigory was chosen as president.

During three intensive years he strove with his comrades to improve supplies for the Sormovo workers. Although the work was not easy and they had had no experience, the board managed to make big changes. The Sormovo cooperative society had fourteen departments catering for virtually every need of the working population; it even had a bookshop.

Anastasia lived with her husband, Grigory Kozin, in Pechory. Kozin was a Party member and a close friend of Pyotr's. They were all members of the same organization and fought energetically against the autocracy. Study circles were held both in our house and in my sisters' flats.

I guided workers and propagandists to those places, and arranged overnight accommodation for comrades living illegally. I also brought illegal literature into the Gymnasium, to our group of students drawn from various schools, who took the literature and distributed it among their fellow-students. I travelled often to Sormovo to see my sister and brother. As I was with them at their meetings I got to know all the leading members of the Sormovo Party organization.

Alexandra Kekisheva, a medical worker in the Babushkinskaya hospital in Kanavino, was a member of the

\* V. A. Desnitsky recalls G. I. Garinov as "the father of the Sormovo Party," and adds: "He was the first of the people who began to gather round me in 1897."



Nizhny Novgorod section of the R.S.D.L.P. (I did not know at the time that she was also a member of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee). On the way to Sormovo, I sometimes called on her with messages from Pyotr. This was a very convenient and safe method of illegal contact, since Dr. Dolgoplov's daughters, Ludmila and Alexandra, were students at the Gymnasium where I studied and my regular appearances at the hospital were thought to be visits to my school friends.

Mother also made many calls on A. M. Kekisheva for illegal literature. She took it to various addresses in Sormovo which Pyotr had listed.

About this time I had an opportunity to see Maxim Gorky at close quarters. He had arranged a Christmas-tree for the children of the poor; about five hundred of them gathered in the riding-school where the party was held. My teacher, Maria Tikhomirova, gave me thirty tickets and told me to bring needy children from Pechory.

When the day came, I and my group of children appeared at the riding-school, but we were too early; things were not quite ready. Carts laden with boxes arrived. Gorky slung the boxes over his shoulders and carried them inside. He wore a tall hat, felt boots, and a long flannel shirt draped over his trousers.

Along the riding-school were tables covered with gifts. The children were shy at first in gathering round the tree, but when the music started they livened up, and the boldest of them started to dance. And the delight with which they accepted their presents! Our children from Pechory talked about the Christmas-tree for a long time afterwards.

The year 1900 saw a great extension of revolutionary activity in the Sormovo works.

It was in that period that my brothers got work there and the events that followed took place. The underground Party organization drew in the best of the workers. Connections were established with the Nizhny Novgorod Committee. The Nizhny Novgorod Committee sent their best leading forces to work in Sormovo—Ladyzhnikov, a

member of the Committee, and Desnitsky, a propagandist. A number of the Sormovo workers were coopted to the Nizhny Novgorod Committee. Maxim Gorky took a warm interest in the affairs of the organization and gave us every assistance.

The underground organization demanded not only selfless and devoted work from its members, but also material help. The Party members' contributions were the chief and constant source of the Party's funds. They were paid into the fund through trusted people in the circles. The money collected was entrusted to Pyotr, who lived with the Garinovs, and was kept in a box he got from Yelizaveta which had contained *khalva*.\* In 1953, Yelizaveta handed this box, and some more of Pyotr's things which had been preserved from the Sormovo days, to the State Historical Museum in Moscow.

It should be said that the Nizhny Novgorod section of the R.S.D.L.P. received great financial help through Maxim Gorky. Leonid Baranov was once sent to Gorky's flat to collect money for the Sormovo organization. He arrived there in the morning and was an involuntary witness of Gorky's ability in influencing F. I. Chaliapin, the great singer, to help the Party's funds. On Gorky's request for money to aid the Sormovo members, Chaliapin immediately handed him 300 rubles, by no means a small sum in those days.

The workers' circles grew in strength. The truthful articles of Lenin's *Iskra*, and local leaflets, were widely distributed among the workers. The police were helpless. Neither arrests nor raids could retard the revolutionary movement among the Sormovo workers.

The winter of 1902 brought the preparations for the open demonstration on May 1. Meetings were held in the form of social evenings in the flats of D. Pavlov, Sorokin, and Tyumenev. I attended these meetings many times with Pyotr. At one of them I was introduced to Josephine Gasher, who later became Pyotr's wife. She carried out propaganda work in Sormovo and often spent the night

\* A sweetmeat made of flour, nuts, sugar and honey.

at Yelizaveta's. Finding me serious beyond my years, she used to call me "the little woman."

With the approach of spring we waited tensely for May Day. Mother brought the banners into Sormovo; both of us knew that Pyotr would carry the large banner on May 1.

#### AFTER MAY DAY

After the Sormovo May Day demonstration Pyotr was imprisoned. The younger brother had been called up to the army in 1901, and Mother and I were left alone in the house. She suffered greatly from Pyotr's arrest, but she never lost heart. We were not allowed to visit him till after the hunger-strike. Our first visit was conducted through a double-barred grill; later we were able to meet in the prison office. Pyotr used to slip me notes when we were shaking hands on parting. I duly handed over the notes to the people concerned; some of them were for Josephine Gasher.

He put a note into my hand one day and asked me to read it before passing it on to Josephine. I learned from the note that Pyotr loved Josephine and the news made me very happy. One could not have wished for a better wife for him. From that day on I saw her very often and acted as go-between for them in exchanging letters.

It was now autumn. The Nizhny Novgorod Committee issued leaflets in great numbers on the coming trial of the demonstrators. Two trials were to take place: besides the case against those arrested for taking part in the Sormovo May Day march, a group of young students were also to be tried for having organized a demonstration on May 5 in Nizhny Novgorod itself.

In the autumn of 1902, Pyotr was sentenced to life exile in Eastern Siberia and was sent to the Butyrskaya transit prison in Moscow.

After his departure our house in Koshelyovka continued at the service of the revolution. Aunt Marya, who lived in the outhouse, and who had caused Pyotr much trouble before his arrest, did not worry Mother and myself. Her

son, Ivan, her daughter, Yevgenia, and her son-in-law, Vasily Cheregorodtsev, a moulder, were active in the revolutionary movement. As in the past, meetings were held in our house, leaflets read, and illegal literature concealed. The house was also a refuge for comrades fleeing from the tsarist authorities.

Mother went to Moscow to visit Pyotr. During the Christmas festivities we went together with Josephine to Moscow and visited Pyotr twice. He had grown a beard and looked older than his years, but he was quite cheerful. The Butyrskaya prison horrified me. In the corridor we met a group of manacled prisoners with their heads half shaven. The rattle of their chains vibrated sonorously through the vaults of the prison. I came away with a heavy heart, thinking that I would never see Pyotr again.

When those condemned for taking part in the May Day demonstration reached their place of exile, help was organized for them. Money came in from collections taken among the workers, from sympathetic intellectuals, and from Maxim Gorky. I was responsible for sending off the money which I received from the organization.

I sent the money in my own name—fifteen rubles a month to each of the six prisoners. Pyotr told me once in a letter—that was before Josephine joined him in exile—that he kept only five of the rubles for himself and handed the remainder to other exiles who had no help from anywhere.

After my brother and his comrades had been exiled, the police vigilance became more rigorous. One raid followed another.

Semyon Baranov and Dmitry Pavlov were arrested in 1903, the former when he was carrying a suitcase of illegal literature. But the work went on; new comrades took the place of those arrested. Leonid Baranov returned (after the demonstration the police searched everywhere for him but he had left Sormovo). Together with Yakov Sachkov, he organized an illegal print-shop in Khramova's house. They would not employ him in the Sormovo works, and in the summer of 1903, he worked as a watch-

man in the library on Nizhny Novgorod market-place. The manager of the library was O. P. Ivanitskaya, so it was a place for Party people to meet and to hide illegal literature. Leonid Baranov carried this literature from the station to the library.

I was still studying at the Gymnasium and carrying out my Party tasks. I knew the meeting place in Dubrava, near Sormovo, the comrades' flats, and guided propagandists to where they had to go.

My teachers, Maria Tikhomirova and Maria Ivanitskaya, were arrested in the winter of 1903-04. They were banished to the Vyatka Province. In the spring of 1904, Olga Ivanitskaya and I decided to visit them. Knowing that I was going to Vyatka, one of the members of the organization gave me a commission. I was to go from Vyatka to Solvychevodsk and hand over money and addresses to one of the exiles (I do not remember his name).

### THE JOURNEY TO SOLVYCHEVODSK

I shall never forget this journey. We went first by boat on a several-day voyage to Vyatka, taking third-class berths. I stayed two days in Vyatka and went off to Solvychevodsk.

I arrived there about two o'clock and started out to find the comrade I was looking for. I asked the first boy I met, "Where do the exiles live?" I went to the house he had indicated and found two exiled students there. They were very happy to see me. I said nothing to them about the reason for my visit, but asked for the man I had been sent to meet. He turned out to be an elderly man, and was standing working at a bench when I came into the room. When the students had left the room, I handed him the money and the addresses. He was very moved, shook me warmly by the hand and thanked me.

I was no more than two hours in Solvychevodsk and returned to Vyatka.

When I got there, I went to Maria Tikhomirova's and

stayed with her for nearly two months. There were five of them living in a commune; they had organized a book-binder's workshop, where I also worked during my stay. I shared a room and bed with Maria. Everything went fine, till one day the gendarmes carried out an unexpected raid. I was getting ready to wash in the hand-basin when Maria appeared at the door. She managed to say, "Varvara, a raid..." when I saw the gendarmes behind her I protested and told them to shut the door and give me time to dress. When the door closed I took a bundle of leaflets quickly from under the mattress and threw them as far as I could out of the window among a growth of nettles. The whole flat was searched but they found nothing.

### ON THE EVE OF THE 1905 REVOLUTION

I came back home in August 1904. Mother had missed me very much; she clasped me to her breast and led me about the room like a child. Again Mother and I were together. Never in my life had I been so happy as in those months. Mother was rejuvenated, interested in everything, and a good comrade to me. Together we studied political economy and read forbidden books; we were both great readers.

We spent our last kopeks on tickets for the opera. We sat in the gallery once during a performance of "Faust" when Chaliapin was singing. Mother knew many songs and always sang when she worked. When our day's work was over she would lie down on the bed and ask me to play something for her on the guitar. I sat down beside her and played softly till she fell asleep.

We continued to help in Party work; sometimes Mother would be gone for a week and more. When one of the comrades put up at our house during these excursions I stayed at my sister's.

Our material position became worse. I gave up going to the Gymnasium as I did not wish to be sent to work as a village teacher afterwards. I was used to Sormovo with its working-class population.

Then I got work as a cashier in the Sormovo cooperative stores. The Party organization was able to carry out its work secretly in the society. Grigory Garinov and the society's book-keeper, Pyotr Zakharov, who was also a Party member, placed many of the comrades who had been sacked from the works in jobs within the society. D. Pavlov, M. Knyazev, G. Kozin, A. Yefremov, P. Melentyev and a number of others were assigned work in the society before I went there.

At that time I stayed with my sister, Yelizaveta Garinova, not far from the Baranovs' house. Semyon Baranov came out of prison, and Leonid, his brother, started work again in the Sormovo works. I was very content with my life in Sormovo.

Following the events of "Bloody Sunday," even the most backward workers supported the revolutionary movement. Meetings were held within the very walls of the works, and the police were powerless. Not a single speaker was arrested, because the workers covered their retreat.

By the spring of 1905, meetings were going on daily in a grove near the workers' canteen. The workers grew bolder. The Cossacks were summoned and installed in the trades school. No sooner had the Cossacks dispersed one meeting than the workers, without even going home, started up another somewhere else. The organization prepared for an armed uprising. Arms were acquired. Leonid Baranov and Dmitry Pavlov, with other comrades, made bombs and tested them in the woods far beyond the Volga.

I attended meetings and gatherings every evening, or went to town to guide comrades and fix them up with accommodation for the night. Members of the Nizhny Novgorod organization and comrades from other towns often stayed or spent the night with the Baranovs or the Pavlovs. Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov\* used to come to the

\* Y. M. Sverdlov was sent by the Central Committee of the Party from Kazan to Nizhny Novgorod in February 1905, and while working illegally (until the end of July), made a big contribution to the work in Sormovo.

Baranovs'. The continuous meetings and assemblies called for intensive work by the Party. Propagandists and agitators were most in demand.

In July the police initiated a pogrom against the Jews in Nizhny Novgorod. The Sormovo organization sent a detachment of armed workers to the help of the Jews. A pitched battle flared up in the Nizhny Novgorod marketplace. A small group of workers armed with revolvers and bombs fought the Black Hundreds and scattered the half-drunk bands of pogromists. The pogrom was averted.

### THE ARMED UPRISING

Leonid Baranov and Iyan Savinov were soon under arrest. They were caught by Cossacks in a steamer as it was arriving in Sormovo from Nizhny Novgorod. Arms were found on them and they were imprisoned till October 1905.

They emerged from the jail in triumph. After the tsar's notorious manifesto the workers rushed to free the prisoners. An enthusiastic crowd greeted Baranov and Savinov. A tremendous demonstration took place the next day in Nizhny Novgorod. The Sormovo workers marched in with banners and music, and singing revolutionary songs. In orderly formation, column after column moved into the square before the fortress. The naive people thought that the tsar had given them real freedom, but the Bolsheviks urged them not to believe in the "tsarist freedom," and called on them to take up arms against the autocracy.

The Sormovo organization prepared for armed revolt. Weapons were collected in many flats. There was a cache of arms in the house occupied by Chugurin on the Sormovo high road.

Evidently the police had been watching here and the Cossacks surrounded the house. Leonid Baranov had only just left with a rifle under his coat. Savinov and some young people were left in the house. Two Cossacks and a police officer named Kimayev began to climb the stairs.

Savinov had a bomb; he threw open the door, and when the Cossacks came closer, he flung the bomb at them. Both



the Cossacks were killed outright by the explosion, and the police officer was wounded. The Cossacks on the street started firing at the windows. Savinov ran down the stairs, seized the rifles of the dead Cossacks, and got out of the way of the bullets. A worker who happened to be passing at the time fell victim to the maddened Cossacks who ran their bayonets through him (I heard about this episode from Savinov, whom I knew very well, and whom I met often at the Baranovs').

About December 10, 1905, I gave up my work in the co-operative stores and went to Mother's in Koshelyovka, where I got ready for my journey to Moscow. I had decided to go with Leonid Baranov and Fyodor Rybnikov who had been called there by the Party. I shall explain later what the call was about. But after two or three days I learned from Vasily Kalashnikov that an armed uprising had begun in Sormovo as well as in Moscow. My place was in Sormovo.

Early in the morning of December 15, about 5 a. m., Kalashnikov and I made our way to Sormovo by a round-about route, along the bank of the Volga, bringing revolvers with us. The usual way through Kanavino was hazardous: the police were stopping and searching everyone there.

One end of Alexander Nevsky Street in Sormovo led into the Sormovo high road and the other end rested against the bank of the Volga, or, to be more exact, the Sormovo backwater. We reached this end of the street safely. The main entrance to the Sormovo works was in this street and the Cossacks were clearly visible outside the gates; from time to time we heard shots. We turned again towards the Volga, pushing our way through gardens till we came to Pochinki.

There we met a comrade who told us the terrible news that the barricades had been smashed up the day before.\*

\* The Sormovo armed uprising began on December 12. Barricades were raised on the following day and destroyed by artillery fire on December 14.

There was not a soul on the streets; the mounted Cossacks were everywhere. The comrade told us that a group of workers who had been defending the barricades had gathered in Pyotr Druzhkin's house on Polyanka Street. I knew the house and we went there.

We found the comrades sleeping soundly on the floor; Fyodor Rybnikov and Leonid Baranov were among them. Druzhkin's wife had kindled the stove and was preparing a meal for the fighters.

We stayed there till evening and it was time to disperse, since it was too dangerous to remain in Sormovo. I proposed that Rybnikov and Baranov spend the night at my sister's in Nizhny Novgorod; Kalashnikov came with us. We discussed the situation in the morning. Word had come that the armed uprising in Moscow had been defeated. Nevertheless the three of us decided to leave for Moscow. I got a coat for Baranov from some local liberals. He would have gone to Sormovo to collect documents and luggage for himself and Rybnikov, but he was told in Gordeyevka by an acquaintance from Sormovo that the police were looking for him.

I went instead; there was no one at Baranov's. A neighbour told me where his sister lived, and we got together all the things necessary for the journey. On December 19, Rybnikov, Baranov and I left for Moscow.

Moscow was in a state of alarm. Patrols of soldiers stood in the squares. All suspicious-looking people were being held up and searched. From the station I went to Pyotr's; Rybnikov and Baranov went to Gruziny district to some comrades there.

I should explain here how it happened that Pyotr, who had been sentenced to life exile in 1902, was in Moscow in 1905.

### **PYOTR ZALOMOV ESCAPES**

In early spring of 1905, Olga Chachina, then a member of the Nizhny Novgorod Committee, gave me three hundred rubles to send to Pyotr. When I asked where the money had come from, she said:

"Maxim Gorky wants to help Pyotr to escape from exile."

I sent the money on to the covering address and waited anxiously for some news from Josephine. I had a long wait! It was three months before I heard from her.

At the beginning of June, Josephine called on us in Nizhny Novgorod on her way from Siberia, and told us the story of Pyotr's escape. By arrangement with some local peasants, he left Maklakovka (his place of exile, a village on the Yenisei, 235 miles north of Krasnoyarsk) by night. His departure was not noticed immediately as he had often gone hunting in the forest and a two or three days' absence was not remarkable. But this time the gendarmes were uneasy. An official called Josephine in and threatened her, demanding to know where her husband was. She replied, "I don't know; he went to the forest and has not come back. I'm worried about him myself."

Later my brother told me that while travelling on a sledge he met a district police officer whom he knew, but the officer did not recognize Pyotr. Even his closest friends would not have known him as they were used to seeing him with a long beard, and he had shaved it off. He reached the railway line safely and took the train. He went to Kiev, where he was given a false passport, and from there he went on to Petersburg.

My brother's long stay in prison and exile had not divorced him from the political life of the country. He worked under a false name in several factories in Nevsky district of Petersburg, doing organizational work for the Party. He made a journey to Maxim Gorky's country-house in Kuokkala.\* He was sent there on the instructions of the Party to arrange for the transportation of arms from Finland to Petersburg; the arms were purchased by the Bolsheviks in emigration.

Soon afterwards, the Party sent Pyotr to Moscow, where he immediately began to help prepare the armed uprising.

\* Kuokkala (now Repino), a village not far from Petersburg, then in Finland, in which Maxim Gorky lived in the summer of 1905.

Gorky himself was actively engaged in the preparation of the revolt; he found money to buy arms, found accommodation for comrades, etc.

A friend of Gorky's, A. A. Razzoryonov, lived near the Perlovka railway station on the Yaroslavl line, and also had a country home. It had been proposed to set aside one room of this house as a workshop for making bomb-casings, which were to be cast by hand. Only the most reliable people could be given this work. At the beginning of December 1905, a comrade arrived in Sormovo with a request from Pyotr that Leonid Baranov be sent urgently to him in Moscow. Leonid went away on December 4, and came back again on December 6, to say that two other comrades were wanted in Moscow. The choice fell on Fyodor Rybnikov, a Party member who was a moulder and had the qualifications needed for the job. With my brother's agreement, I was appointed to maintain connections and see to the transportation of the finished casings.

When we arrived in Moscow, Baranov, Rybnikov and Pyotr went out to Razzoryonov's in Perlovka, where they discussed the most practical way to make the casings. However, for a variety of reasons, the project had to be abandoned.

On the day I got into Moscow, Pyotr had just got back from the Krasnaya Presnya barricades, where he had taken part in the fighting. He got home only with extreme difficulty. Josephine had lost hope of him; for several days she had searched through the morgues among the dead comrades, and in the hospitals.

During these tense days there was a severe frost. Fires were burning on all the streets and squares, and the patrols were gathered round them stamping their feet and warming themselves. Arrests were taking place in all parts of the city. The tsarist government had instituted a reign of terror among the workers. Policemen in civilian clothes were detaining and searching everyone on the street who looked in any way suspicious. More than once people were shot in the back while trying to escape.

Pyotr remained in Moscow till the spring of 1906, work-

ing actively in the Bolshevik organization. His health had been seriously undermined. The hunger-strike, prison and exile had left their mark on him.

### HARD TIMES

I left for Petersburg at the beginning of 1906 with Leonid Baranov. Some time later his brother Semyon and Mikhail Chuchin arrived from Sormovo where it was no longer possible for them to stay. Dmitry Pavlov came in from Moscow. But our Sormovo community found life difficult in Petersburg; work was almost impossible to get.

I was introduced to Pyotr Franzevich Lesgaft, to whom I confided our plight. Lesgaft acted boldly and nobly; in the teeth of the black reaction he did not hesitate to give work to the Sormovo barricade fighters. There and then he fixed jobs for Baranov and Pavlov as watchmen at the university, and allowed us in our free time to attend the lectures. The men received seventeen rubles a month each, with the right to have dinner in the students' dining-room at three rubles a month. We divided the two dinners into five portions and we all had enough to eat, filling up with bread. During the day, the other comrades searched for work, and in the evenings we met in the auditoriums to hear lectures on anatomy, history, and other subjects.

We put in the time in this way till March 1906. By then we had established contact with the Party who entrusted Baranov with organizing a secret print-shop. Three comrades were needed to work the press. Officially, Baranov and I put our personal affairs in order, changed our names to Svetsitsky, and as husband and wife took a flat in Podrezovaya Street to set up the illegal press. M. Chuchin came to stay with us as a boarder.

We began feverishly to work. In June our task was interrupted and we had a week in which to rest. We told the janitor that we were going to a country-house, but in fact, went to my cousin's, Yevgenia Vasilyevna Cheregorodtseva. Her husband worked in the Franko-Russian works and they lived on the Pryazhka, in house No. 66.

We had been there a few days and were getting ready to leave for home one evening, when my cousin brought in a newspaper, in which we read the startling item: "Secret printing-press found in Podrezovaya Street in the Sventsitskys' flat. The Sventsitskys have fled."

We now had to register in our personal passports and live with the Cheregorodtsevs, and managed thus to evade the police. Chuchin was arrested in the flat, tried and sentenced to three years solitary confinement in the fortress.

We remained with the Cheregorodtsevs for two months. My husband got work in a calico-printing works owned by the Leontyev brothers. But he was sacked following a strike, as a member of the strike committee. After our son was born we found things more difficult.

In 1909, I helped my husband in his preparatory examinations for the polytechnical school. He worked and studied. The work was arduous and a year later he contracted tuberculosis. I gave him all the care I could, earning money as a tutor wherever possible. Again we had to live through a period of ten months' unemployment, and I lost all hope of my husband's recovery.

### IN THE YEARS OF THE CIVIL WAR

The great proletarian revolution found us in Moscow. We lived in a flat owned by the Mikhelson factory where my husband was working. The shells from the guns fired by the revolutionaries flew over our roof. Armed workers from this factory took part in the fighting for Soviet power, but to my great sorrow, I was prevented from helping in the October Revolution because I had to look after my young children.

The food situation in Moscow was very bad. I left for Sormovo to live with my mother-in-law. I met Maria Ivanitskaya in Nizhny Novgorod, and she advised me to go to Lyskovo, which was on the Volga, not far from Nizhny Novgorod, where she said I would get work. I went there with the children. I worked there as the manager of a bookshop, a librarian, and a teacher in a chil-

dren's home. My husband joined me in the summer of 1919 and got employment as an instructor in a trades school.

In the years of the Civil War, the members of our family were scattered all over Russia. My sister Alexandra was in Tomsk with her family. Anastasia and her eldest son, Alexander, who were taking part in the Civil War, moved south with the Red Army. When the Red Army captured Baku, Anastasia decided to make her home there. My sister Olga's son, Sergei Denisov, was killed in Siberia fighting the Kolchak bands. Nevertheless, in spite of the years of devastation, our young people, the children of our sisters and brothers, had an entirely different life. In home-made shoes, in coats made out of old great-coats, our youth flocked to the workers' faculties and high schools to study. The old generation had won this privilege for them.

Pyotr was in the quiet provincial town of Sudzha, in the Kursk Province, during the years of War Communism.

After the 1905 Revolution, all his comrades who had been exiled were allowed to return from Siberia and live legally. Pyotr also decided to resume a legal status. He came to Nizhny Novgorod and got a passport in his own name, but the police barred him from staying in any town where there were factories and workers.

His wife had been appointed school-teacher in Sudzha and he was left with no choice but to take up residence in this small town.

In fact, his stay in Sudzha was for him a second exile: he was forbidden to travel and could get work nowhere. The police watched his every move. His health, which had been shattered by the hunger-strike, imprisonment and exile, took a turn for the worse during those years. He felt terribly unwell, especially in 1908-10. So, under constant police surveillance, he lived there till the February, 1917, revolution.

While he was living in Sudzha, he took up horticulture and corresponded with Michurin. On Michurin's advice, Pyotr cultivated in his garden the best types of Michurin fruit-trees and spread these among the peasants in the sur-

rounding villages. His gardening helped him to live, and at the same time was a screen for his revolutionary work among the peasants.

With the first days of the October Revolution, Pyotr became virtually a new man. In spite of his ill health, he gave all he had to the work of building the new socialist society for which he had fought all his life. But he himself tells this in more detail in his letter to our brother Alexander; I give an excerpt from this letter below.

### **Excerpt From Pyotr Zalomov's Letter to His Brother Alexander**

"...In 1917, I took part in organizing Soviet power in the district. The revolutionary Council accepted my draft proposals for the organization of the District Council of Commissars, and I was appointed Commissar of Labour.

"It was very difficult to carry on our work as we were completely cut off from the centre and from Kursk.

"When the Whites occupied Sudzha they tried several times to hang me, but I always managed to escape the noose. The last time I was arrested by Denikin's men, who court-martialled me. My captors jeered at me, and almost daily threatened to hang or shoot me. I was prepared to die, and during the visits to the lavatory in the exercise yard I tried to enlighten my escort on the aims of Soviet power.

"Fortunately, I was in the second group captured; the first group of nine prisoners had been thrown into cauldrons of boiling pitch which had been placed in the town square. The population, even the local bourgeoisie, were horrified by this crime of Denikin's men. The teaching community and the townsfolk came energetically to my defence. There were differences of opinion among the eight officers who constituted the court martial. The military commander, a colonel, was specially adamant in pressing for a death sentence, because I had berated him boldly at the time of my arrest. On the eve of the trial a firing squad of nine was formed.



"Several attempts were made to provoke me into running away at night, when I went to the lavatory on the other side of the yard. If I had accepted this suggestion, there is no doubt that I would have been shot in the back, and then a proclamation would have been posted to the effect that Pyotr Zalomov had been shot while attempting to escape. Notwithstanding, the jailors decided firmly to 'liquidate' me, and would have carried out their intention if the Red Army had not arrived."

### UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH

Pyotr told me many times about his life during the Civil War. I recall one story particularly. Here it is in full.

The town was in the hands of the Whiteguards. One night they appeared suddenly at the gate and knocked, shouting, "Open up." Pyotr opened the gate, and a gang of Whites, led by an officer, burst in. They ransacked the house and broke the lock of a box-room where a French teacher's belongings were kept (she had left them in Pyotr's care before going away from Sudzha). The Whites loaded two carts with things from the house and went off with them.

Pyotr was indignant at this robbery, especially since he had promised to look after the teacher's property. He made up his mind to get it back. It was impossible to interview the commandant right away as there was a long queue waiting to see him. Pyotr called on some well-to-do acquaintances of a school-teacher he knew and with their good offices gained immediate access to the commandant.

My brother informed him of the robbery at his house early that morning. The officer shouted at Pyotr, "That's a damned lie. Our army does not commit robberies." Pyotr pointed to one of the officers in the room and said, "There's the one who was in charge, and he took away two cartloads of property from my house." The commandant jumped up and ordered my brother to be put under arrest. He was seized and thrown into the basement. Thus,

thanks to the *good offices*, he was in prison again and facing death.

Besides Pyotr, there were three other prisoners in the basement; Nikita Sagaidakov, a local teacher, a quiet, in-offensive man, was among them.

First they took one man out of the basement, and then another. Pyotr and Sagaidakov were alone. They talked quietly. Night came on; the guards were singing:

*When I die, let me be buried  
In a grassy grave....*

The sad and melancholy strains of the Ukrainian song weighed heavily on the two prisoners.

"They're singing a hymn to the dying," said Sagaidakov. "Oh, how I want to live."

To dispel the teacher's gloomy thoughts, Pyotr told him about the heroic way in which his favourite hero, Stepan Razin, had died.

Sagaidakov was taken out at dawn. Pyotr embraced him warmly, and waited his own turn.

However, the town was captured by the Red Army, and Pyotr was released; he then learned the details of Sagaidakov's death. This retiring, modest man had died the death of a hero. They made him stand at the edge of the grave where the already murdered comrades were lying, and demanded that he betray the Communists. He remained silent. They tortured him until his body was just a bloody mass....

When the bodies were exhumed, Nikita Sagaidakov was identified only by scraps of his shirt. The dead were re-buried with solemn music and banners. The population of the town followed the martyred comrades to their last resting place.

With the advent of Soviet power, Pyotr did extensive work among the peasantry. He was a natural agitator. He was good at talking with the peasants; he organized the reading of newspapers, simply and clearly explaining to the peasants the policy of the Soviet Government in the villages.

He received thirty copies of the paper, *The Poor*, regularly and took them to the market-place, going from cart to cart and handing them to the peasants, and talking to them. The talks were very successful; many peasants gathered round to listen to the latest news from the front, or about the cooperatives, or new decrees and decisions of the government.

When the collective-farm movement began, Pyotr organized one from among the Sudzha peasants; it was named: "Red October." The poor peasants joined the collective farm. The kulaks launched a furious campaign against it, trying in every way to break up the new venture, and repeatedly threatening to kill Pyotr.

The collective farm came into being in 1930, and for seven years Pyotr held unbroken membership of the farm board and worked unceasingly to build the farm.

### DECLINING YEARS

Mother came to stay with me in Leningrad in 1935. She spoke at many meetings of workers about her past experiences. I went with her on all these engagements and remember especially the meetings in the Sevkabel works, the Uritsky factory and other places.

The meeting with the women workers of the Uritsky factory\* was of outstanding interest to Mother and myself.

It was the eve of the 18th Anniversary of the 1917 Revolution. The women assembled in the large shop producing cigarette-tubes. They were eager to meet their guest, Anna Kirillovna Zalomova.

Whoever saw Mother then must have remembered for long a tiny old woman, with surprisingly lively, even roguish eyes, her face furrowed with deep wrinkles, yet so amiable and cheerful, her grey hair covered with an

\* Anna Zalomova's visit to the Uritsky factory was recorded by cine-camera and included in the documentary film, "The Zalomov Family," issued in 1937. The producer was V. Belyaev, and the script was written by D. Levonevsky and G. Dolinov.

old-fashioned, black lace scarf, and her soft voice reciting with emotion and in simple words the events of her life.

The women, young and old, listened breathlessly to Mother's story.

"Defend Soviet power! Stand firmly for the cause of the working class! Today, with all the pride of a mother's heart, I say to you that the same banner which my son Pyotr carried high, now waves proudly free over our whole country."

With these words Mother ended her speech, coughing slightly, and tucking in the troublesome ends of her scarf with her work-worn hands.

The elderly women looked curiously at Mother's face, lit up by the bright electric lamps. They asked themselves: was she like the Mother Gorky had written about?

When they had listened to Mother telling about the hunger-strike, here and there someone could be seen wiping away a tear. Who other than mothers could better understand how her heart had been torn in anguish for the life of her son?

While she was moving through the excited crowd, the women vied with one another to shake her hand. They invited her to come back a second time. One of the women handed her a bouquet of flowers and said:

"When we read the book *Mother*, we felt you were one of our own. We admire your resolute spirit and selfless work. You can't imagine how many millions of mothers' hearts have been filled with warm love for you through reading this book."

I wrote to Pyotr about Mother's speeches. Here is the letter he sent in reply:

"Dear Mother,

"Varvara has told me about your speeches. I am very happy. I congratulate you and I am proud of you. Your speeches are no less valuable than the leaflets and banners you carried in the past. . . .

"You have had much suffering in your life, but you can be proud that you have reared an entire generation of

fighters for communism, that your life has not been without purpose, as aimless as the lives of many, many thousands of philistines who live only for themselves.

"I kiss you warmly, dear Mother.

"Your son, *Pyotr Zalomov.*"

### FRIENDS MEET

In April 1937, I received a letter from Nina Denisova, Mother's granddaughter, my sister Yelizaveta's daughter. She wrote:

"Dear Aunt Varvara,

"Please do come this summer. In a year or so Grandmother will not be able to see you ever—she is going blind. . . . She doesn't crochet or read any more, just lies or sleeps. You must come, please. Grandmother wants to see you so much.

"*Nina.*"

Pyotr was also repeatedly inviting me and my husband to Sudzha, painting a tempting picture of the fine holiday we could have in his house and garden. My husband and I—he was then chief engineer in the Gipromash—decided to go to see our old friends and comrades, and look once more at the places where we had spent our youth and did our revolutionary work.

We left Leningrad on June 18, 1937. We were overwhelmed with the hubbub and movement in Moscow. We went down into the Metro. When we as youngsters had dreamed of socialism, not even in our dreams had we visualized such beauty, luxuriance and comfort which real socialist construction was giving to the working people. We felt like staying in the Metro for ever. We acted young again, riding up and down on the escalators several times.

We found Pyotr having dinner with his youngest daughter, Lolya, and her children, "Yurka and Irishka," as they were called. His wife, Josephine, and his oldest

granddaughter, Yulya, a pretty dark-eyed girl of about eleven, were there too.

Pyotr looked just the same: the same broad shoulders, and youthful, lively eyes; only he had gone grey. Josephine was just as active as we had always known her. The whole year round she rose at 6 a.m. and her day was filled to overflowing. She was an unusually methodical woman, always managing to finish in time anything and everything she started. For many years, besides her own main occupation of teaching, she engaged in work of political enlightenment among the teachers in her district. Josephine helped my brother a great deal in all his public work. She gave him great assistance in spreading the idea of collectivization, and in the work among the population, especially among the women. At the time I stayed with them, she taught in two Party schools in the suburbs, apart from everything else she was doing. Her teaching work was later acknowledged very highly by the government when she was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labour in 1939.

I was able to see her excellent pupils, students of the local technical school where she taught history and at the same time conducted correspondence courses. All the students were from collective farms and many of them received appointments in their own farms.

Pyotr's house had undergone a noticeable change: the Regional Committee of the Party had seen to its repair.

He was an efficient gardener. He cultivated some 60 Michurin varieties of apple-trees and pear-trees and had even won a prize of 750 rubles. One of the journals printed an article praising his work as a gardener.\* He received letters from all parts of the country, from school children, from Red Army men and working men and women; not one of the letters remained unanswered.

During this visit I became more closely acquainted with Pyotr's youngest girl, Lolya, also a Communist as were all the other members of his family. She had graduated

\* There is an excerpt from this article on page 195.

from a Moscow higher school, and for some years had been teaching Party history in a technical school, workers' faculties, and Party study courses. Her husband Pavel was studying at courses under the Central Committee of the Party in Moscow, and before that he had been Secretary of the Arzamas District Committee of the Party.

I shall never forget those evenings spent with my brother's family. Pyotr read excerpts from his "Recollections" and letters and told us many things.

We did not want to leave Sudzha, but the days of our holiday were coming to an end, and we still had to go to Gorky and Sormovo.

On our journey through Moscow we visited Pyotr's eldest daughter, Galina, also a Party member and an inspector of youth labour under the Central Committee of the Auto Workers' Trades Union. We met her husband, a civil engineer in the railway industry. In his youth he had been a herdsboy; later, as many others did, he went to school; his biography is typical of many of our new Soviet intelligentsia.

And now Gorky.

First we went to Sormovo. We looked through the tram-car windows but did not recognize anything. There were no longer any fields between Kanavino and Varikha. New buildings everywhere. A new asphalt road lay like a ribbon. Then Varikha, Daryino. . . . All the separate villages had grown into the one Sormovo District. Behind what we used to call Daryino, a white building, the Palace of Culture, had sprung up on the fields, and nearby an extensive park was spread out, merging into a natural woodland.

And now the Sormovo high road. The same road about which the song rang out: "The Sormovo high road is flooded with tears." But we did not recognize it either. It was also asphalted; on one side there was a stretch of green, and on the other side, grass with flower beds.

Hello, our native Red Sormovo! Leonid and I walked through the flower alleys, past the place of the 1902 demonstration. . . . His eyes lit up . . . he stopped me.

"Look, Varvara, that's where Pyotr was arrested with the banner. . . . Here we clashed with the soldiers. . . . And from that lane the Cossacks came riding out to lash the people with their whips. That was after Pyotr had been arrested. We had agreed beforehand to retreat and mix with the crowd. The Cossacks lashed out indiscriminately; I got a whip across my back, but I flopped over that fence there into Sedov's garden."

We went on farther, and again more memories of Sormovo events. There was Balakhonov's house, from which the armed workers had exploded a bomb before the barricade as the soldiers were coming in on the attack. And there the place where the main barricade was built in 1905, near that red-brick schoolhouse. And not far away were Pleskov's and Dybkov's houses, where the wounded had been brought.

Leonid and I went into his old house.

After looking round Sormovo we made our way to Gorky. The bus left us at the Trades Union House after a twenty-five-minute journey. When we were passing the market-ground we again saw nothing that we recognized. In place of the old pontoon bridge over the Oka, there was a new, handsome bridge. In the distance we could see another new bridge over the Volga—a railway bridge. In the fortress, the House of the Soviets occupied the spot where the cathedral used to be.

We walked up Dzerzhinsky Street where Mother and sister were living. We went into the courtyard and saw someone coming to meet us, an old woman with a stick in her hand, groping her way towards us. It was Mother. Oh, how sad it was to see her like that. She was going blind and could move only slowly. I threw my arms around her and hugged her tight to my breast. She kissed both of us, and with our arms tucked round her, we led her up to her room.

Mother and sister had a bright room on the third floor



of a new building. Large lime-trees grew outside the windows, and the stadium could be seen some way off. Mother made me sit opposite to her with my face to the light; she looked at me closely before she began asking about my family and about my work among the women, and listened thoughtfully to all I had to say. Sometimes I told her the same thing over again, but she just smiled and nodded her head approvingly.

In the evening, Pyotr Denisov and Nina, Mother's oldest grandchildren, came in. Pyotr Denisov is sister Olya's eldest son, an engineer employed in the Gorky auto works. He and other workers who had mastered their trades and were now engineers or shop foremen had grown up together with the building and extension of the works. He had worked and studied simultaneously. In 1937, he was appointed foreman of the main assembly line. When I was listening to him, I recalled involuntarily his family's past.

There they were, three small brothers: Pyotr, Sergei, and Vladimir. Their father, Pavel Denisov, was assistant engineer on the steamer *Izvestny*; the family lived on the steamer during the summer. Their cabin, which was right next to the engine, had very little space. When they were leaving or entering the cabin, the boys had to squeeze themselves against the wall so as not to be caught by the shaft of the engine.

But how could five people live in such a room? Pyotr and Sergei slept on folding seats, Olya with her husband on the narrow berth, and Volodya under the berth. The parents never thought for a minute that one day their son Pyotr would become an important engineer supervising the largest department of a giant works.

I went next day to see the old Denisovs. They had never got over the loss of their second son, Sergei, who was killed in Siberia fighting against Kolchak. Vladimir, their youngest son, was a chief book-keeper in Gorky, and their youngest daughter, Valya, was in the auto works.

We were to meet someone else that evening—my sister Alexandra arriving from Tomsk. Yelizaveta and I went

tramping off cheerfully through the rain to meet her at the station. A few minutes after the loud speaker had announced the train's arrival we were embracing Alexandra who was as grey as Yelizaveta. But how much like Pyotr she had become. She was sixty-six years old, had been pensioned and had come home to live with Mother.

Next day, her sons Kolya and Alyosha came too and all of us gathered in Mother's room. I liked my nephews from Siberia very much. Alyosha had just finished the Tomsk Pedagogical Institute and had been given a teaching appointment in Stalinsk. Kolya had graduated the Odessa Institute of Communications and had already been working for a year in Kamchatka as assistant foreman of the Kamchatka Regional Radio Administration. He was a Communist and had been Secretary of the Party Committee in the institute where he had been studying.

In the evening we arranged ourselves in a group around Mother; Alyosha lay on the floor. Mother was lively and seemed to have taken a new lease of life. We asked her to recite something from memory; she recited poems by Nekrasov, Béranger and A. Tolstoi. Kolya and Alyosha marvelled at her excellent memory and eloquence. We sat on till very late.

At this time a delegation of Austrian workers had come to Gorky and wanted to meet Mother. The meeting was arranged for June 27, in the stadium not far from Mother's house.

Alexandra, Yelizaveta and I went there with Mother in a car supplied by the Regional Committee of the Party. A group of about thirty young men and women with friendly faces met us as we got out of the car; benches were brought and we all sat round Mother as she talked with the Austrian youth through an interpreter.

At the end, a young girl rose and thanked Mother warmly on behalf of the delegation. Her words brought tears to our eyes.

"Dear Anna Kirillovna," she said, "the Austrian workers know about you and love you. We admire the story of your revolutionary activity, and your life is an example

and inspiration to us in our struggle against fascism. Our mothers are following in your footsteps, and your name will live for ever in our hearts. We wish you more long and happy years."

"Thank you, my dears," said Mother with great feeling. "Keep on fighting; you, too, will soon win victory. Labour will conquer capital."

She stood up and the young people gathered round her.

"How sorry I am that I don't see so well," she said. "How I'd like to remember your faces."

She took hold of the girl by the shoulders, turned the girl's face up to the sun and peered at it closely. The girl suddenly stooped and kissed Mother's hand. The Austrian workers presented Mother with a bouquet of flowers; then we said good-bye and drove away.

### MOTHER'S DEATH

Back in Leningrad, I resumed work. On the instructions of the Cultural Committee, I investigated the work of housing committees, listed illiterate people and led classes in adult schools. Time passed quickly; the winter came on unnoticed. Alarming news started to come through from Gorky. Mother was now almost totally blind. This distressed her fearfully as she liked so much to read. The preparations for the elections to the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet were going on everywhere; the new Soviet Constitution was being discussed throughout the country, but she was unable to read even one printed line. On her request, her granddaughter read patiently to her in the evenings.

On December 4, I received a letter from my sister. She wrote:

"Mother is noticeably worse. She lies most of the time, sighing and repeating, 'Soon it will be pitch dark.' Blindness is depressing her. And good news has just come from the Social Insurance Department promising to give her a new flat soon in the Old Bolsheviks' House. What a pity she is blind; she won't be able to see her new home.

She can now make out only numbers, cannot distinguish faces, and knows people only by their voices."

My sister did not write for a good while after I had had this letter and I was getting worried. Then, on February 16, came another letter:

"Dear Varvara,

"I know you are waiting for news of Mother. We have been given a lovely flat with all conveniences. But Mother now sees nothing at all. It is heart-breaking to look at her. She seems to have shrunk, and looks so small, like a little girl. She won't eat anything, drinks only milk, and very little of that. The doctor is attending her; it seems that there is something wrong with her liver. We have to keep a hot-water bottle by her side all the time. Sometimes she sits propped up with pillows for five minutes or so, and then lies down again. Two weeks ago she was a little better and with my arm round her she walked through the rooms."

On the evening of March 7, 1938, I received a telegram: "Mother has passed away." I left at once for Gorky.

So many people turned out for the funeral that from Mother's house to the edge of the grave there were two solid walls of mourners. The procession moved slowly to the strains of the funeral march. In front were wreaths from hundreds of organizations. The people threw flowers on to the coffin. A meeting was held at the graveside to pay the last respects. The Red Banner lowered over the coffin for the last time; the sacred emblem of the revolution draped low over the remains of Anna Kirillovna, Gorky's Pelagea Nilovna. The crowd stood silent....

The last oration was delivered by Pyotr.

He stood at the head of the grave and spoke out unexpectedly strong and clear so that all could hear him. While he spoke his body was trembling and I could see the superhuman effort it cost him to make the oration over the body of Mother. In the stillness his words came out rhythmically:

"From hundreds of miles away I have come to you for the last time, my dear Mother, to speak to you and to all the mothers of our great socialist country. I have come to read these last words that have been written with the blood of my heart."

The people stood so still that we could only hear the laboured breathing of the crowd. Pyotr went on:

"In the long, sombre years of inhuman oppression and savage exploitation of the toiling people by tsarism, the landowners and the capitalists, certain humane people found consolation in dreams of the wonderful future which was supposed to follow from the moral rebirth of the blood-stained barbarians who held in their hands political and economic power over tens of millions of working people—factory workers, peasants, non-manual workers, and the intelligentsia.

"Only the great leaders of the proletariat proved scientifically that the world must not only be changed, *but can be changed* by decisive and inexorable struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, by building socialism and communism.

"For the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the building of socialism and communism, heroic efforts were necessary not only by the leaders, the highly gifted people, but also by the rank-and-filers, the modest workers, among whom belong you, my dear Mother.

"Not at once, but only with great difficulty, did you understand the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin. But once you had grasped the meaning of these ideas, you did not grudge your own freedom and life or the freedom and lives of your children.

"Your work was modest and retiring, but it was essential for the success of the working class, just as were the endeavours of tens and hundreds of thousands of fighters for communism like you.

"You received a high award. Your life suggested the heroine of the novel *Mother*, created by the genius of the great proletarian writer, Maxim Gorky.

"And you lived to witness the radiant happiness brought by the victory of socialism over one-sixth of the earth's surface.

"You knew, my dear, that in tsarist times, to call publicly for the overthrow of the government was punishable in one way only—death by hanging.

"You knew, my dear, that the soldiers, on the orders of their officers, might have impaled me on their bayonets. Nevertheless, knowing this, it was you yourself who brought the banner with the words: "Down with the Autocracy"; it was you yourself who put it into my hands.

"We have millions of mothers like you.

"When the menacing hour of battle to maintain the sacred frontiers of our multi-national Union of Soviet Socialist Republics approaches, all the mothers of our land will themselves place rifles into the hands of their sons and daughters.

"I love you and shall always love you, my dear one.

"I shall love you, not only because you gave me life, but also because you were my friend, my courageous and trusted comrade in the struggle to make real the dreams of the best people of the human race: the struggle for the splendours of communist society.

"Sleep peacefully, dear Mother. You have trod the long, hard, but glorious road with honour, and you shall live in my heart till it ceases to beat. Accept my last kiss, and farewell for ever."

There was absolute quiet for a few minutes. Pyotr stooped and kissed Mother. Then all the nearest kin followed suit. I was the last to bid her the final farewell.

The coffin was lowered into the grave. The mound of earth covering the grave was soon lost to sight in wreaths and fresh flowers.

#### AGAIN WITH THE FAMILY

I came to Moscow in December 1939, to attend a meeting of adult school teachers which was dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of Lenin's decree on adult educa-

tion. I decided to go out and see Pyotr's youngest daughter, Lolya, and ran into Pyotr at the entrance to the house. He was waiting there for Ivan Ladyzhnikov. We were both startled and delighted at the unexpected meeting. He had come to Moscow to receive the Order of the Red Banner of Labour which had been conferred on him and a large group of Sormovo workers in connection with the 90th anniversary of the Sormovo works.

Very soon, Ivan Ladyzhnikov drove up; he had aged greatly, but was still the same simple, modest and kind man I had always known him to be.

We met Pyotr again in the evening. He had always taken a great interest in me, asking me in great detail about what I was doing, and it was just the same this time. I spoke long about my work in the adult schools. I remember that he was very pleased with the fact that, in my teaching, I did not confine myself to the curriculum but tried as much as possible to draw my housewives out of the narrow circle of their kitchen tubs and stoves.

Pyotr heard with great interest how I used the Nekrasov library to organize a series of excursions, held weekly lectures on international topics in the school and utilized the travelling library. My housewives were learning to read.

I told him with some satisfaction about my students who had gone on to higher schools or who were now working in industry.

Pyotr spoke about his affairs and about Sudzha. He was then working on his "Recollections" and he told me how, when he had met Gorky in 1934, Gorky had convinced him, in a friendly way, to write his memoirs.

"Write," said Gorky, "you must write; your life is important, you have to tell people about it, and you can write well."

My brother loved Gorky deeply and could never speak about him without emotion. He was highly gratified when, at last, the promise he had made to Gorky some years before was realized and his *Recollections* was published in Kursk.

We talked, and near us Lolya's children were playing. I saw how tenderly Grandfather Pyotr looked at the then two-year-old Pyotr Zalomov (now a student in the Moscow University), and remembered how, in 1938, after Mother's funeral, my brother and I had gone straight to Lolya's, and Pyotr had seen his grandson for the first time; Lolya had given the child her father's name—Pyotr Zalomov. The three of us had bent over the baby in his cot; a funny little mite with a black tuft of hair looked up at us; little Pyotr smiled and two dimples appeared on his cheeks. He was a lovely child and I could see that my brother had lost his heart to his grandson.

On saying good-bye, Pyotr kissed me, said I was a "clever girl" and wished me more successes in my work with the housewives.

Pyotr and I met again during the Second World War in Mother's flat in Gorky; he and Josephine had just come from Sudzha, and I from besieged Leningrad. My husband Leonid had just died as thousands of others had died in Leningrad. My younger brother Alexander died on the way to Gorky, and I had to see to his funeral in Orekhovo-Zuyevo. Besides my brother's family, Yelizaveta and Alexandra were staying in the Gorky flat.

Pyotr was then showing his age, although he looked as hale and hearty as he had ever been. His eyes were the same—lively and youthful. His beard was now fully white and he walked with slower steps, with the aid of a stick. He was very vexed that he could not take part in the defence of the country with arms in his hands, or that he could not work in industry making weapons for the Soviet Army. His militant nature shouted out for action. He still had the fiery language of an old revolutionary and he continued to put this at the service of the people.

Cars were sent often for him; he spoke at many meetings, constantly visited the wounded in the hospitals, spoke over the radio or went to speak at meetings in the Sormovo works.



He had a wide correspondence in those years; I found him often at his writing-table and read some of his letters later in the newspapers.

Delegations from the Soviet Army, the Gorky auto works and other factories, the young people of the town, the Young Communists and the Pioneers, came often to his house to invite him to meetings.

I remember a group of children from the kindergarten next door coming to see him in the summer. Pyotr decided to entertain his little guests in the garden as there was not enough room in the house to hold them all. He sat upon a bench under a tree with the children round him; they had a long talk together; Pyotr could speak simply and well with children. They took his hand, stroked his beard and listened carefully to "Granddad." Both sides evidently were very pleased with each other.

I left Gorky in April 1947 and went back to Leningrad. My youngest son, Kostya, just demobilized from the navy, was also returning. We got our old flat back, and after an eight-year interval, again took up life together. Kostya soon got work; my part was to see to restoring our home, for nothing remained in the flat but the bare walls. Unexpectedly I came across an old suitcase, full of books and papers, lying in the basement of the house; some of the notes I had made during the blockade of Leningrad were among the papers. I read them over and remembered again all that had happened during those days; I paid a visit to the Museum of the Defence of Leningrad. I wanted to write my story of the beleaguered city, and in my free time I started tentatively to write.

I went to Gorky again at the end of June, 1949. Of all the memories of that visit, the one I recall most clearly is when Pyotr, Josephine, Galina, and I went to the Sormovo works. There was a teachers' excursion leaving Gorky that day for Sormovo and we decided to join it. It was a clear, sunny day. A car came for Pyotr and we all left together.

Pyotr was greatly attached to his beloved Gorky and Sormovo. He kept quiet, but I could see that he was

greatly excited by the journey. That's to say nothing about my own feelings; a visit to Sormovo always thrilled me.

I did not recognize the yard of the Sormovo works; it had changed so much. Where there used to be heaps of scrap-iron, now were young green trees, with many-coloured flowers in the grass plots. The pathways between the shops were laid with asphalt.

We walked through the yard down to the bank of the Volga where the boats are built. I was astonished with what I saw there. The future boats were in pieces: the bows there, the sterns here and the midships over there—all under the yard roof. We were looking at the last word in Soviet shipbuilding—prefabrication.

In one of the departments we watched two young girl welders who were welding large plates as the crane brought them up like clock-work. The work went smoothly and efficiently in their hands.

I was very anxious to see the engine-shop where Pyotr used to work before the demonstration of 1902; he had promised to show me his working place, but it was beyond his strength, for the walk in the heat of the day soon tired him out. He and I sat on some logs on the bank and waited for the others.

Work was going on feverishly to finish three tugboats which were to be launched on the 100th anniversary of the Sormovo works. One of them, I remember, was to be named after a hero of Krasnodon—Sergei Tyulenin.

It was only two weeks before the celebrations; we could not see how it was possible to finish the boats by then. The inquisitive Pyotr put the question to a young foreman who was passing at the time and he confirmed briefly and simply that the boats would indeed be launched by the 100th anniversary.

I learned afterwards that they had been launched ceremonially on time and had started out on their service to the Soviet people who had built them on the 100th anniversary of this works, one of the oldest Russian enterprises.

We did not wait long for Josephine and Galina who were still wandering round the departments. As we drove away in the car we were both too occupied with our own thoughts to speak much. I thought of what I had just seen and regretted not being able to stay for the celebrations and to take part in the holiday of the great Sormovo family. I thought of the many familiar faces I would have been able to see again; former Sormovians, many of them old friends of mine, were coming from all parts of the country. I did not know then that Pyotr was to be decorated on this anniversary with the highest order in our country—the Order of Lenin.

The car took us past places we knew of old, past the new buildings erected on the previously open fields between Sormovo and Kanavino. Our native town, bestrewed around us, sang with the sound of workers at their tasks, the air hazy with the grey factory steam. We drove away quickly. But even the fast car could not keep pace with the swiftly moving memories of dear and friendly faces of the comrades of Nizhny Novgorod and Sormovo. In our minds arose the image of a large friendly family giving all its strength and energy to the struggle against autocracy and capitalism, workers and intellectuals, the old generation of revolutionaries, the underground workers, who had gathered together and reared the new generations of fighters. Many of them are no more, but their endeavours had not been in vain; I saw the results of their labours everywhere.

## YELIZAVETA ANDREYEVNA GARINOVA \*

Yelizaveta Andreyevna Garinova joined our Marxist workers' organization in 1897, at the same time as her husband, Grigory Ivanovich Garinov (the prototype of Rybin in Gorky's book *Mother*). Meetings of workers were held in the autumn of 1897 in my cousin Anna Mikhailovna Vesovshchikova's flat. They were also attended by the Nevzorova sisters. The sisters were among the members of the first Petersburg circle led by Lenin and we workers first learned the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin from them.

After their imprisonment in the Peter and Paul fortress, the sisters, who were then students, had been banished to Nizhny Novgorod under strict police surveillance.

The sisters were watched closely by the police, and Yelizaveta Garinova and my uncle, Yakov Gavryushov, were given the task of secreting our illegal literature and securing our meetings from unexpected raids by the police and the gendarmes.

On two occasions, Yelizaveta saved our organization from total arrest, and both times she was assisted by my uncle Yakov.

Yelizaveta's husband came to work in Sormovo when

\* Written by P. A. Zalomov in August 1939. The heading is the editor's. Yelizaveta Garinova (1869-1957) is Pyotr Zalomov's oldest sister.

he left the Dobrov and Nabgoltz factory. I also got employment in the Sormovo works in the autumn of 1899 after I had been sacked from the Perm railway workshops.

Yelizaveta helped to protect our meetings in Sormovo, kept forbidden literature in safety, warned us of impending raids and was able on several occasions to avert the destruction of our Sormovo Marxist organization.

A friendly cab-driver, who invariably drove the procurator and the gendarmes from Kanavino to Sormovo on raiding expeditions, sent his young son on in front, running all the way to Sormovo to tell Yelizaveta that his father had said: "Guests are coming today."

The procurator received exact information from his spies and agents concerning the persons suspected of having illegal literature, but on each occasion his expectations were thwarted, and he always went off again empty-handed and in a scarcely concealed fury.

Yelizaveta continued her revolutionary activity after I had been arrested by the company of soldiers at the political demonstration on May 1, 1902.

During the 1905 armed uprising in Sormovo, she smuggled in revolvers, carrying them in a basket under a covering of potatoes.

Without fuss and loud-sounding phrases my sister worked over many years for the victory of the socialist revolution, but she was so modest that she placed no value on her work, and never acknowledged her own service to the revolution. When anyone mentions it she usually replies that she had only done what she had been told.

## APPENDIX

### MATERIALS RELATING TO P. A. ZALOMOV

#### THE LENINIST *ISKRA* ON THE POLITICAL DEMONSTRATION IN SORMOVO, MAY 1, 1902, AND THE TRIAL OF ITS PARTICIPANTS

*"Iskra," No. 21, June 1, 1902*  
*Section: "From Russia"*

The Nizhny Novgorod Committee sent us the following report of the May Day demonstration in Sormovo.

"Comrades! Everyone is talking only about what happened in Sormovo on May 1. What did happen there? Let's consider this and draw some lessons for the future.

"Great discontent had accumulated among the workers and more than once it had burst forth in the form of disorders and destruction. On this occasion, too, there was damage done.

"At five o'clock, a crowd of workers marched to the works office and destroyed various documents there. The same thing took place at the office of the works police. But a body of more politically conscious workers arrived. 'What do you think you're doing?' they asked. 'Wrecking the works office will get us nowhere. We have to find other ways of getting rid of the oppressive social system.' These admonitions had some effect on the crowd.

"Afterwards the advanced workers marched in closed ranks along the Sormovo high road, singing revolutionary songs and carrying red banners on which were written: 'Down with the Autocracy!', 'Long Live Political Freedom!' and 'Long Live the 8-Hour Working Day!'

"Densely packed people lined both sides of the road. The demonstration had such an effect that many of the crowd were weeping as they listened to the harmonious singing.

"Soldiers were summoned. The demonstrators walked on to them, then turned and resumed their march. The soldiers threw themselves upon the marchers and began to break up the crowd with their rifle-butts. The unarmed workers were forced to retreat. Only one comrade remained to the end, still holding his banner. 'I'm not a coward and I won't run,' he shouted, holding the banner high so that all could read the challenging words: 'Down with the Autocracy! Long Live Political Freedom!'

"Comrades! Who among us will not bow the knee before this courageous man, who alone, braving the soldiers' bayonets, refused to leave his post? We shall never forget his example. Let us all fix firmly in our minds the words on the banner. Let his example inspire us with the fervent, irrepressible desire to fight to the end for freedom. Let us place our demands anew, and sing our songs of liberty, as we believe truly that the next demonstration will embrace the greater part of the workers. So, let us fight to the end!

"Meantime we invite all comrades to take up collections for the defence of those now under arrest, for the victims of our general cause.

*"The Nizhny Novgorod Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party."*

In Nizhny Novgorod itself two unsuccessful attempts were made to hold demonstrations.

THE POLITICAL TRIALS

In a separate pamphlet we publish the indictments in the political trials arising from the demonstrations in Nizhny Novgorod and Saratov on May 1. It appears that another such trial has been instigated against fourteen workers employed in the Sormovo works (Nizhny Novgorod Province) who took part in the Sormovo May Day demonstration. The Sormovo and Nizhny Novgorod cases are to be heard at the end of October. The hearing of the Saratov case should have begun already but it has been postponed.

The cases against the political demonstrators have been prompted by the malevolence of the tsarist government. After vain attempts to suppress the spectre of the revolution by the police-whip, the government has had to resort to the musty weapon of the rigged trial. We are convinced that the comrades will survive with honour this new test of their political maturity and will utilize the trial in the interests of the Party.

We are unable to publish the full indictment in the Sormovo case, so we shall limit ourselves to the main points in it.

[*Iskra* then follows with an outline of the indictment against P. A. Zalomov, age 25, peasant origin, from Koshelyovka, Yelna Rural Area, Nizhny Novgorod District; A. I. Bykov, age 22, and M. I. Bykov, age 24, of the town of Lukoyanov; P. D. Druzhkin, age 26, peasant origin, from Sormovo village, Balakhna District; N. V. Frolov, age 28, peasant origin, from N.-Serginsky Rural Area, Krasnoufimsk District, Perm Province; A. P. Lyapin (Burenkin), age 26, peasant origin, from Sormovo village, Balakhna District; M. I. Samylin, age 24, steel-worker from Vyksy village, Ardatov District, and seven others "charged with crimes as laid down in Article 252 of the Code of Correction."]\*

\* The parts of the text here and in Zalomov's letters which are in square brackets have been inserted by the editor.



"The accused," says the indictment, "on the basis of the aforesaid . . . are charged with having, on May 1, 1902, in the village of Sormovo, Balakhna District, with the aim of insolently impeaching the autocratic government and the authority established by law, held a procession along Sormovo high road and Alexander Nevsky Street, with the singing of revolutionary songs and carrying red banners, one of which had the inscription: 'Down with the Autocracy! Long Live Political Freedom!' and taken the liberty, both during the procession and in the acts of violence against the Sormovo works, of shouting repeatedly: 'Down with the tsar,' 'Down with the autocracy,' 'Long live political freedom,' that is to say, committed crimes as listed in parts 1 and 2 of Article 252 of the Code of Correction. As a consequence of this, and in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article 1030 of the Rules of Criminal Procedure, all the aforesaid persons are committed to trial at the Moscow Court of Justice.

*"September 12, 1902  
"Moscow.*

*"Procurator,  
"Court of Justice,  
"P. Kurlov."*

*"Iskra," No. 29, December 1, 1902*

**FROM THE ARTICLE: "NEW EVENTS AND OLD QUESTIONS"**

Alongside the Rostov battle, there appear among the outstanding political events of the recent period the hard-labour sentences imposed on the demonstrators. The government has decided to frighten everyone, first with the whip and then with hard labour. And what a splendid answer it has received from the workers whose speeches are given below; how instructive this reply is for all those who were especially noisy about the disheartening results of the demonstrations, not with the aim of encouraging further work along the same lines, but with

\* The article is from Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 251-52.

the aim of preaching the advantages of the infamous individual resistance.

These speeches are a splendid commentary from the very depths of the proletariat on such as the Rostov events, and at the same time, are a remarkable declaration ("public evidence," I would say, if this were not a specific police term) and bringing tremendous exhilaration into the prolonged and arduous work of organizing the "actual" movement.

Most remarkable in these speeches is the simple, originally exact expression of how the everyday *tens and hundreds of millions* of oft-repeated facts "of the oppression, poverty, slavery, degradation, and exploitation" of the workers in modern society bring about the awakening of their consciousness, the growth of their "indignation," the revolutionary manifestation of this indignation (I have placed in inverted commas those expressions which I *had* to make use of for a characterization of the speeches of the Nizhny Novgorod workers, because these are the same famous words used by Marx in the last pages of the first volume of *Capital*, which inspired the "critics," opportunists, and revisionists to so many noisy and ineffectual attempts at refutation and exposure of the Social-Democrats, in that they were not telling the truth).

It is precisely because these speeches were made by simple workers, by no means leaders in the extent of their development, and who spoke not even as members of some organization or other, but as part of the crowd, it is precisely because they stressed not their personal convictions, but facts from the life of every proletarian or semi-proletarian in Russia, that we find so much encouragement from their declaration: "That is why we went consciously on the demonstration against the autocratic government." The commonplace and "mass" nature of the facts from which they drew this conclusion is an assurance that thousands, tens and hundreds of thousands will arrive at the same conclusion if we are able to continue, extend and strengthen the many-sided, con-

sistent and systematic revolutionary (Social-Democratic) influence upon them.

"We are ready to go to penal servitude for the cause of the struggle against political and economic slavery now that we have felt the breath of freedom," said the four Nizhny Novgorod workers. We are ready to die—echoed thousands in Rostov, having won for some days the right of political assembly, and repulsed a whole series of military attacks on unarmed gatherings.

Here are the victors—is all that remains to be said to those who have eyes to see and ears to listen.

*The same No. of "Iskra" (29)*

#### THE NIZHNY NOVGOROD WORKERS ON TRIAL

We reprint the speeches of the Nizhny Novgorod workers\* from the mimeographed leaflet issued by the Nizhny Novgorod Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. To add anything to these speeches would only weaken the effect produced by these artless accounts of the distress of the workers and the growth among them of revolt and readiness to struggle. Our task is to ensure that the speeches are read by tens of thousands of Russian workers. The example of Zalomov, Bykov, Samylin, Mikhailov and their comrades, in defending heroically in the court the militant call: "Down with the autocracy!" will inspire the whole working class of Russia to the same heroic, decisive struggle for the freedom of all the people, for the steady advance of the workers towards the bright socialist future.

#### THE SPEECH OF THE SORMOVO WORKER ZALOMOV

I joined the demonstration conscious of what I was doing, but I do not plead guilty because I consider my participation in the demonstration to be justified: the demonstration was a means by which to express protest

\* *Iskra* published in this number the speeches of Zalomov, Bykov, Samylin and Mikhailov. This material was later issued by *Iskra* in a separate edition.

against those laws which defend the interests of the privileged wealthy class and deny the workers any possibility of improving their conditions of life. And these conditions are so abnormal that the workers are compelled, no matter at what cost, to fight the obstacles standing in their way, although to do so may lose them their freedom and even life itself.

From early childhood, I felt the insupportable burden which is on the backs of the working people. Because of the premature death of my father, who had spent himself in work beyond his strength, our family had to live an existence of semi-starvation.

Later, I became a worker myself, using up all my strength and health in adding to the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few people. I saw that the members of my family, if I was minded to have one, would share the same fate as myself. I could not understand why the workers should be condemned to perpetual slavery; there seemed to be no possibility of them living or even dreaming of a cultured life. I could see no hope of escape from this meaningless existence and I often thought of committing suicide as the one possible way out of an impossible situation.

But when I learned from the history of other peoples that their working classes by indefatigable struggle had emerged from conditions similar to ours I realized that such a struggle was feasible here too. The prospect, however faint, of raising the economic and moral level of the backward masses of the working people, gave me a new lease of life. I knew that the workers would have a bitter struggle in front of them, that it would be difficult to overcome the impenetrable darkness of ignorance in which the workers and peasants are compelled to live, and that there would be many victims in the struggle for a new way of life.

But where is the man who, if he has not a stone in his breast instead of a heart and if he is not satisfied with a purely animal existence, would not give up freedom, life and personal happiness for the cause of the people's liberty.

From personal experience gained in ten years' work in the factories, I realized that a worker, by his own efforts alone, could not achieve normal living conditions, and that exploitation compelled him to put up with the life of a beast of burden.

Many people think that piece-work allows the worker to earn more by working harder. In fact, the worker may put in greater effort, but this leads only to the exhaustion of his strength, because it is impossible to increase the intensity of labour endlessly, and yet this is the only way a high level of wages can be maintained. The higher wage paid for more strenuous work leads to a reduction of the piece-work rates, and no limit is ever placed on the lowering of these rates.

Piece-work and the reduction of rates deprive the worker of the last of his leisure time, force him to work nights and Sundays over and above the ordinary working day, and yet no matter how hard he works he cannot earn enough for a decent life.

Similarly, the worker by his individual effort cannot raise wages and piece-work rates to the level required to meet even his most pressing needs. And his needs are increasing, if slowly enlightenment is spreading among the working people. The workers are trying their best to give their children an education. The public libraries can show the great thirst for knowledge among the workers. In most libraries, in spite of the fact that the majority of useful books are prohibited, the number of subscribers is larger than the number of available books.

Neither are the workers satisfied with the filthy, greasy rags which go under the name of clothes. How deep is their desire to dress well can be seen from the way in which many of them deny themselves food in order to have presentable clothing.

It is obvious that it is not for pleasure that workers coop themselves up in small overcrowded hovels that do not answer even the most primitive demands of hygiene. The workers understand that nourishing food and longer rest periods are needed to restore the energy lost

in their heavy work. They yearn generally for more cultured living conditions, and only those who deliberately close their eyes to this cannot see it.

The abnormal living conditions bring severe suffering on the workers, and force them to seek some outlet from the impossible situation they find themselves in as a consequence of the shortcomings of the present social system.

One cannot expect humanity from the factory-owners, who, while they look on themselves as human beings, see the worker, not as a man, but as an instrument for their own self-enrichment, and the shorter the time needed to draw the last drop of blood out of the workers the better they are pleased.

The owners unite in joint-stock companies in order to exploit the workers more successfully. They form syndicates and combines—for example, the combines of the sugar manufacturers and oil barons—to maintain the prices of the goods, produced by the workers but belonging to the owners, at the highest possible level. To further their own ends, the capitalists put prohibitive tariffs on foreign products of a higher quality and cheaper price imported into Russia.

The individual worker can no more defend himself against exploitation, can show no more resistance to the owners than a piece of lead under the weight of a hydraulic press. The individual worker has to accept the conditions of work laid down by the owner, as without work he cannot live.

And even with united forces, the workers, in the absence of favourable conditions, cannot stand up to the employers who do not starve as the workers do when the factories are idle. The workers cannot share in the profits made out of their labour without joining in one fraternal union. But they are denied this single way out, since the laws which permit the employers to exploit the workers forbid the workers to defend themselves against exploitation, and trades unions and strikes are persecuted.

If they have to achieve more decent living conditions, the workers must have the right to use the strike weapon

against the employers; they must have the right to organize trades unions, have a free press, be able openly to speak at meetings about their needs, and finally, to take part in legislation through elections, because every success gained by the workers over the employers may be consolidated only after it has been embodied in the laws.

For all the reasons I have outlined, and knowing that the workers are justified in trying to be repaid for their labour by better conditions of work and life, I joined the demonstration deliberately. I knew that the demonstration was to be held and resolved to take part in it, and made banners with the words: "Long Live Social-Democracy!" on one; on another: "Long Live the 8-Hour Working Day!" and on the third: "Down with the Autocracy! Long Live Political Freedom!"

I took these banners on the demonstration, and they were opportune as the marchers had no banners and could express their protest only by shouting, "Down with the Autocracy," "Long Live Political Freedom!" and by singing revolutionary songs.

I knew that my presence on the demonstration made me liable to penal servitude. A dreadful punishment, and in my eyes worse than death, as there the human personality is degraded completely and abused at every step. But the hope that by sacrificing myself I might bring even the most insignificant advantage to my fellow-men, recompensed me fully for any suffering I have undergone or that is likely to come to me.

Personal misfortune, like the drop in the ocean, is lost in the grief of the people, and to help the people I am ready to lay down my life.

The feeble protests from the workers have brought no real change as yet. The authorities, and society generally, connive at the malpractices and open breaches of the law on the part of the owners. Consequently, something out of the ordinary had to be done to draw public attention to the abnormal conditions of the workers, and to the way in which the government ignores their interests.

The workers who create the wealth and defend the country against the external enemies, give everything to the government, but in return are deprived of all rights, and any capitalist can use them as slaves.

I saw that the present social system is of benefit only to a small minority: to the ruling class. So that until the autocracy gives way to political freedom, the further cultural development of the Russian people is an impossibility. I saw that the workers in their struggle with the employers always clash with the employers' ally, the autocratic power, and that autocracy is the enemy of the Russian people.

That's why I wrote on my banner: "Down with the Autocracy! Long Live Political Freedom!"

*The same No. of "Iskra" (29)*

*Section: "From Russia"*

*Nizhny Novgorod.* First of all I have to inform you of the verdicts in the trials here. In the Sormovo case, six of the accused: Zalomov, Samylin, Alexei Bykov, Druzhkin, Lyapin and Frolov, have been deprived of all property rights and sentenced to life exile in remote parts of Siberia; the other seven have been acquitted.

In the Nizhny Novgorod case, two of the accused, Kislova and Georgievsky, have been found not guilty. Moiseyev and Lubotsky have been deprived of all property rights and exiled for life to distant points in Siberia; the remaining five, Dobrokhotova, Sineva, Lenivova, Mikhailov and Dertev, have been deprived of all property rights and banished to places less distant; Mikhailov is 21 years old, and Lubotsky is only 16.

Everyone agrees that the accused faced their trials courageously; not only did they not deny their part in the demonstrations, but they also declared themselves to be revolutionaries and that they would always remain so. The speeches of Zalomov, Samylin and Moiseyev were particularly impressive. They, and indeed all the others who spoke, described how they had come to hold their revolutionary convictions.



They all held to the one common defence. Almost nothing was said at the second trial about the actual demonstration on May 5. There was little left for the defence counsel to say; one or two of them even complained that the accused had spoken so well in their own defence that it was difficult to improve on their speeches, and it might have been dangerous to do so as they might have found themselves in the dock. And to have spoken worse would have been shameful.

The defence counsel, therefore, confined themselves to harassing and confounding the witnesses for the prosecution, and to give them their due, they were very efficient at their work.

Now one story after another can be heard in the town. One of them is about a witness who was obviously a police agent. The story goes like this: After he had answered all the questions according to the book, he was asked by the presiding judge, "Have you anything further to say?" and he replied, "No, I have no more instructions from the chief."

The director of the Sormovo works was made to look small. He had bragged about how well the workers were living and how the owners had put up a hospital and a school for them. The school alone, he said, costs the factory management 3,000 rubles a year. The lawyer then said to him, "Isn't it the case that a definite percentage is deducted from the workers' wages for the upkeep of the school?" The director answered reassuringly that the deduction was very small, only a kopek to the ruble, and that the monthly wage bill was very high, over 30,000 rubles. "And you still think that the school is maintained by you?" asked the lawyer.

The prisoners were tried under Article 252, but in the second category of offenders, carrying a lighter sentence.

We are told that the prosecuting counsel's speech was very short and strange. At the second trial he said that the accused had revealed so much about themselves and their guilt that there was nothing he could add. How freely the prisoners were allowed to speak can be seen

from the fact that Moiseyev ended his speech with:  
"Down with the autocracy!"

"*Iskra*," No. 35, March 1, 1903

#### FROM BEHIND THE BARS\*

*From the editors.* We are publishing in this issue a letter from one of the workers condemned for taking part in the Nizhny Novgorod workers' demonstration. We have decided not to publish his name in order to avoid new repressive measures by the enemies who now have our selfless comrade in their power. Without the help of a signature, his closest friends will immediately recognize the writer. To readers who do not know the author personally the letter is the testament of all those who, together with him, were taken from our ranks, those who with such courage and fortitude continued to carry on the fight for the cause of Social-Democracy from the dock.

We should like to say a word or two on the views of the writer regarding the role of the accused in a political trial. Now when the government has changed its tactics in political cases, and court proceedings may confront every Socialist, it is very important to know the correct tactics which revolutionaries must hold to in court.

A protest must be made by us against all trials by officialdom and in each particular case. The author of the letter is right here. But such a protest does not warrant a "rejection of any defence," and the more so a refusal to speak in court.

Our appearance in court is the continuation of our struggle outside, and, just as in that struggle, we do not confine ourselves to *protests*, but *expose* in detail the politics of our enemies, and *agitate* against them for the advancement of our ideas, so also in the court-room must we uncover the whole rottenness of tsarist "justice" and expound our own programme.

\* The heading is that given by *Iskra*. The text is a letter sent by P. A. Zalomov to the Nizhny Novgorod Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.

This is why participation in court proceedings with the aim of exposing the methods used by the police to obtain evidence, and the exercising of the right of a final speech for the defence of our views, are an important means of political struggle which our Party cannot afford to discard.

We cite the example of such a political figure as Zhelyabov. In the court case of March 1, Zhelyabov protested against the trial itself, but this did not hinder him from using all his rights to continue the fight both in the course of the judicial inquiry and in speaking in his own defence. It would have been an irretrievable loss for the cause if Voyevodin,\* Zalomov, Samylin and others of the accused had walked off the stage without having delivered their last, *agitational* speeches.

As to the views of those who emphasize the need to "preserve our strength for the future," it is surely plain that we cannot be guided *exclusively* by this consideration. A revolutionary on trial necessarily represents his Party in the eyes of a large section of society, and is *obliged* to play this role with dignity. But this, of course, does not mean that a revolutionary in all circumstances must *meet his accusers half-way*, and by his own admissions take the court out of a difficult situation which they may often get themselves into owing to lack of evidence.

We know our accusers too well to think that they would hesitate now or in the future to put on trial some person or other on the sole basis that he was harbouring "inner thoughts" against the autocracy. We are all aware that at the Saratov trial one of the accused was convicted only because she had declared her solidarity with her comrades, though even the prosecutor rejected the evidence which the gendarmes had acquired at the interrogation, and which was all they had against her.

It is clear that in similar cases it is necessary to press for a reversal of the court decision (by cassation) and

\* P. I. Voyevodin—one of the accused in the case of the Saratov political demonstration on May 5, 1902.

for an acquittal. Where it is possible to *insist* on an acquittal, it must be done, since we are far too short of forces without voluntarily handing comrades over to the enemy. A revolutionary should understand when to abandon the purely juridical grounds of his defence.

We trust that the Party will take up this important question. In the meantime, we want the widest distribution of the letter which we publish, "From Behind the Bars," which by its revolutionary enthusiasm will not leave a single young fighter unaffected.

\* \* \*

"Greetings, comrades. I send you my warmest regards and best wishes.

"The question of the appeal has kept us busy for a long time. An appeal was thought to be necessary if only to show once more that we are under arbitrary rule, and that even such a high authority as the Senate is simply a weapon in the hands of the government, and is ready at any moment to strike at the roots of the laws which they themselves are the custodians of.

"While we were discussing the appeal from this point of view, we lost sight of the fact that it might have a bad effect on simple people who cannot find their way about in the niceties of jurisprudence and who might think that we only wished to make things easier for ourselves—something which we do not have and never had in our minds.

"If people got this impression from the appeal, it would destroy the effect created by the demonstration. Once we had thought the matter over, we decided firmly against lodging an appeal. Only those who had not admitted in court that they had consciously joined the demonstration have put in an appeal.

"I do not know what you think of my speech, but I am very dissatisfied with it myself. Not enough thought was given to it and it is a bit unconvincing in places. I shall try to explain why I am not pleased with it.

"I must confess that I was generally against the tactics we used in the court and agreed solely out of comradeship.

"At the beginning, two of us, and then I alone, put forward completely different tactics. I insisted that we should refuse any kind of defence, and that we must declare at the trial that we do not recognize the court, that we look on this and similar trials as acts of violence against us, and that the judges are simply tools in the hands of the government which will use any and every means to destroy its enemies.

"I thought then, and still hold the same opinion, that such tactics would have had a clearer and stronger repercussion. And my advice to the comrades is that they hold to such tactics at future trials.

"You will no doubt be interested to know how it came about that the majority of the prisoners decided to speak in court and thus to recognize the validity of the trial. There were three lines of action proposed. The first, which I supported, I have already mentioned. The second was that we should, somehow, maintain our forces intact for the future, and do all in our power to get a lighter sentence. The third was that used by the majority of the accused in court.

"There were so many heated discussions that we could not reach a decision for a long time. Indeed, we thought once that matters would sort themselves out and we would find ourselves without defence counsel anyway.

"As you are already aware, we clashed with the prison authorities, a dispute which ended with the hunger-strike. All this took place when we were at the height of our differences about the tactics to employ in court. Not only did we refuse to eat during the hunger-strike, but we also stopped having exercise and did not see any visitors. Consequently, we had no contact with the outside world.

"We were given a week to put in applications for defence counsel, and the week could have passed before we had re-established connections with the outside as we expected the hunger-strike to be prolonged and thus prevent us from having an interview with our lawyers, so that the question of having defence counsel, in these circumstances, would not arise.

"I was taken to hospital, and brought back to jail only on the last day of the week granted to make applications for our defence. When I got back to prison, I found that the other comrades had sent in their applications, and consequently we were to be defended at both trials. My proposal to refuse to recognize the court had been turned down, and so I accepted the decision of the majority.

"We had very little time left to work out our speeches properly in preparation for the trial. I had to throw my speech together during the last remaining day. There was no time to elaborate it seriously since the lawyers came to see us on Sunday and we had to spend the greater part of the day with them. At 4 a.m. on Monday morning we were on our way to the court.

"There was another point which I thought very harmful. The lawyers were at pains to warn us that we must not make our speeches sharp, or we might be stopped from speaking altogether. It was then quite clear to me that once we had agreed to be represented by counsel and to speak in our own defence, then come what may, we just had to speak, although we had to prepare our statements so that, while moderate in tone, they would nevertheless cover everything we wanted to say.

"You know the Krylov fable where it is said: 'There's trouble when a shoemaker bakes cakes, and a baker cobbles shoes.' To some extent we also were applying ourselves to tasks we knew nothing about. How could we have learned to make speeches? Now, like it or not, we just had to speak.

"I am terribly vexed now that my views on how we should act at the trial did not prevail, and that I did not use all the possibilities I had at my disposal. Well, we can't do anything about it now; there's no sense in crying over spilt milk. If only we had to stand trial again! But I know that those who follow us will benefit from our experience.

"We have now been struck off the list of the living; it is to be hoped that the sentences we received will not raise fear and alarm among the less class-conscious workers, and I would give much to prevent this hap-

pening. We know that, from the outside, prison takes on a fearsome aspect; in point of fact the punishment is trifling. The worst they can do to us is to take away our lives. Now if they were only able to take away our convictions, that would be a real tragedy.

"Against our enemies we still retain our strongest armour—the belief that our cause is right, the knowledge that other comrades, stronger in spirit than we are, will take our place, the certainty that the army of fighters for freedom and justice is growing every day, that these warriors will not stop half-way but will go right on to the end, giving their last drop of blood, if necessary, for our cause.

"I can tell you that I have not faltered once during my time in prison; on the contrary, my resistance has grown. One of my regrets is that I did not have an education, as an educated man can do a great deal more than a half-learned one, and I feel my limitations here very much. I am now firmly convinced that prison cannot weaken the force and strength of one's convictions; instead it helps to harden a man, to make him more implacable. And I am not speaking from theory, having tested this for myself.

"Another thing I regret is that I have so little to give to our beloved cause—that I have only one life to sacrifice. I would have suffered torture, let them put me on the rack, and what did they give me—exile for life.

"I send my warm, brotherly greetings to all the comrades. Let them think kindly of me. I know that I have made many mistakes, that many comrades had been dissatisfied with me on occasion. I may be reproached for many things, and if sometimes I gave reason for complaint, and did not always agree with the opinions of others, I was impelled exclusively by the desire to do more for the cause. In this lies the whole meaning, the whole aim and passionate longing of my life.

"Yes, I've been crossed off the roll of life! But while a drop of blood remains in my body, my boundless and earnest striving for liberty shall remain alive, and my resolute faith in the inevitable victory over the enemy shall never die.

"Yes, life marches on. It demands that those who battle for freedom must be more and more selfless and staunch. And we shall go out to meet liberty; we shall give our best without reservation in this fight.

"How fortunate we are to be living in such glorious times, not to have to grope our way in the hopeless darkness as those who blazed the trail for us had to do. We are quite sure that what we are doing is for the well-being of the people.

"Before us lies a broad, direct road, at the end of which can be seen the beginning of a new, happy life. The road abounds with obstacles, but we shall moisten its hardness with our blood and fill the ruts with our bodies and nothing will be able to stop the victorious march forward to liberty and the happiness of the people.

"Yes! We are glad not to have been born a hundred years later, and to have had the opportunity to make our modest contribution to the prosperity of all mankind.

"What else can I tell you? With all my heart I embrace my comrades-in-arms and wish them joy and greater success in their work. The moral link between us shall never be broken, though we may be separated by enormous distances. I shake your hands firmly. Greetings to you, brave hearts!"

## **P. A. ZALOMOV ON A. M. GORKY**

### **LETTER OF P. A. ZALOMOV TO M-VA\***

*February 15, 1928 (Sudzha)*

"Dear Comrade M-va,

"I am very glad that my letter was of some use to you. I have no objection at all to your using it for your article,

\* Printed (without the salutation and the first paragraph) in the book *Maxim Gorky in Nizhny Novgorod* (Nizhny Novgorod, 1928). M-va was a girl student of the Second Moscow State University who, in 1927, had to write an essay on the novel *Mother* and approached Zalomov with a number of questions on the subject. M-va's article, which is mentioned in the letter, was intended for publication in this book, but it was not published.



although I don't agree with your estimation of Gorky as a *bourgeois writer*.

"I have never had the time or possibility, nor sufficient knowledge, indeed, I had no inclination even, to take up the study of literature. Nevertheless, I have formed an opinion about Gorky, both as a writer and a man whose sympathy was on the side of the proletariat. We workers who had any dealings with him always looked upon him as one of ourselves. And this is by no means my opinion alone.

"I am completely ignorant of scientific methods of classifying writers, but what is important for me is not who the given author writes about, but *how he writes*. Yes, Gorky wrote much about the bourgeoisie and philistines, but how did he portray them? He castigated and poured contempt on them.

"I am familiar only with certain of Gorky's works, but in no circumstances could I agree that he was the *exponent* of the thoughts and feelings of the philistines. If you had said *portrayer*, that would have been more to the point. Surely the exponent of the thoughts and feelings of some class or other can only be one in whom these thoughts and feelings are crystallized to a very high degree.

"I read the play *Philistines*. This play is *murderous* for the philistines. No, a philistine would not write about philistines in that way; he would idealize them. The American bourgeoisie were enraptured with John Reed\* until such times as they understood that he was their deadly enemy.

"Gorky regarded philistinism as a vile and abominable phenomenon. It wasn't for nothing that he portrayed the philistine in his *Song of the Falcon* in the form of the Grass-Snake, which wants only one thing—to be *warm and damp*, which laughs at the idea of *flying in the heavens*, and cannot understand the fiery, militant

\* John Reed (1887-1920)—American journalist who gained fame during the First World War. While in Russia in 1917, he greeted the October Revolution in his writings. He died a Communist and was buried near the Kremlin wall in the Red Square, Moscow.

enthusiasm of the Falcon—the proletariat, the single thoroughgoing revolutionary class. And isn't it really this proletariat that is represented in the Stormy Petrel which laughs at the elements and which, with feverish excitement and tense expectation, awaits the coming of the storm?

"Thirty six years ago, when I first started to work in the Kurbatov factory in Nizhny Novgorod, when, together with other comrades, I called on the young workers to join the underground Marxist organization, to take part in the irreconcilable struggle with world capitalism, the working-class philistines, and we had quite a few of them, declared hatefully, 'You and your damned politics, you should all be hanged.'

"When I met Gorky for the first time, he threw his arms round me and kissed me. Then he stepped back a little and said, 'So that's what you look like!' I told him that he would never write anything better than the *Song of the Falcon* and that I would stand by him in the battles to come. He replied, 'We shall be there together.'

"Like me, Gorky worked for the revolution, the armed uprising.

"Can this be the Snake? Is this the exponent of personal well-being? Is this the quintessence of philistinism?

"The greatest, the most ardent exponent of the thoughts and feelings of the proletariat, the one who expressed with great genius the *spirit of the proletariat*, was Lenin. But if Gorky knew little about the workers and wrote little about them, that is no reason for including him among *exponents* of the thoughts and feelings of the philistines.

"Gorky is ours!

"P. Zalomov."

FROM P. A. ZALOMOV'S LETTER TO A. M. GORKY

January 19, 1936 (Sudzha)

"Dear Alexei Maximovich,

"On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the 1905 Sormovo uprising, I was called to Red Sormovo where

I was taken round in a car to address a series of meetings. I spoke to the workers, to the students of a military college, and to the 49th Regiment in the fortress. I also addressed the Young Pioneers, the secretaries of the Y.C.L. factory committees, the artistes, the school-teachers, and spoke in the Sormovo Palace of Culture when the writer Avdeyenko delivered a lecture on your book *Mother*.

"I also spoke in the engine-shop of the Sormovo-works where I was employed at one time, and at the celebration meeting held on December 24, 1935, in the Sormovo Palace of Culture.

"I am not deceiving myself, indeed, I am quite well aware that my popularity is founded not so much on my own services to the revolution, as that I happened to fall by chance within the rays of your world fame, by being identified with your 'Pavel Vlassov.'

"Your role in the proletarian revolution, in the world proletarian movement, is enormous. We workers love you whole-heartedly, not only as a genius, but also as our nearest and dearest, as a comrade in the struggle for the highest human culture.

"Don't be angry with me, but somehow today I cannot address you in the usual formal way. Indeed, it was you yourself who allowed me, on June 19, 1934, to use the familiar form of address.

"You have told me that my life has been of some importance and that I must write my recollections. Others before you have given me the same advice and insisted that I write my reminiscences, but I thought nothing of it, as I did not, and do not, think my life-story to be all that important.

"It seems to me to have been an ordinary, normal life, and I could not have lived any other. You will agree that life is interesting only when one may fight for the whole world, as Marx and Engels taught us, and as we were taught by Lenin. That is why their names are as a bugle-call to battle.

"It is dull and tedious to squabble over a brass button; we found, and find, inspiration, not in your hissing, slithering Snake, but in your bold Falcon—the proletariat.

"And how well you said: We sing the madness of the daring!"

"I kiss you warmly.

"Your P. Zalomov."

#### A MEETING IN KUOKKALA\*

I have loved Maxim Gorky for a long time, for his honest, fiery, proletarian spirit, for the fact that he was a great proletarian writer, for the flaming heart of his Dan-ko, for his *Song of the Falcon*.

Alexei Maximovich Gorky heard of me even before the Sormovo demonstration of 1902, and wanted to make my acquaintance, but I was in bad odour with the police and did not wish to bring harm to him; I was afraid to increase the hatred already felt by the police towards Gorky whom they looked on as a dangerous enemy of the autocracy.

When I was arrested at the 1902 demonstration in Sormovo, Gorky was very considerate to me. Every day he sent my dinner into the prison with my mother, and just before the trial, he sent word to all of us not to be afraid of the tsarist court, promising his support while we were in exile and saying that he would send money to help us escape.

Six of us from Sormovo were banished for life to Eastern Siberia and deprived of all property rights. For the first attempt to escape, the punishment was 25 lashes and six years hard labour, and for the second attempt—50 lashes and 12 years hard labour.

Alexei Maximovich kept his word; he sent me 15 rubles a month while in exile, and 300 rubles to help me escape.

My first meeting with Gorky took place in 1905 in his country home in Kuokkala after my escape from exile. To

\* From an article by P. A. Zalomov in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, No. 51, August 20, 1937.

shake off possible spies, I alighted from the train at the last stop but one and went on foot through the woods in the rain the rest of the way. As I approached the house, I saw in the yard a tall, wiry figure of a man. He came forward to meet me. I remembered him from a photograph I had seen, and introduced myself.

We old workers who had seen the beginning of the Marxist movement in the factories and mills were revolutionary romanticists. The *Song of the Falcon* had sounded to us like a trumpet-call to action, and we were always very affected by it. And now here before me was the author of the *Song of the Falcon*; here was the living, courageous Falcon, the Stormy Petrel of the Russian revolution—Maxim Gorky. He embraced me and kissed me warmly. Then he looked at me and said, "So that's what you look like!"

He and I went into the house, to his study on the second floor, with windows looking out on the sea. I told him how much I loved his *Song of the Falcon*, and that I would stand by him in the battles to come. He replied, "We shall be there together."

I was wet through and shivering with cold. Gorky had a room prepared for me, took me there and sent in his own linen, shoes and outer clothes. But what warmed me more was the stern affection in his kindly eyes. He asked me many questions about my life, my father and mother, the revolutionary work and the Sormovo organization.

I told him only the cold facts, saying little about my personal feelings and nothing at all about my dreams. From a false sense of shame I kept quiet about the beatings in the police office and in the Nizhny Novgorod prison tower, and how I felt about it all.

The thought never entered my head that my stories, my life, were to be a canvas for the famous literary work which was to play such a great role in awakening the broad masses of workers to political consciousness.

Gorky put a number of notes together from my narrative, but they were confiscated during a police raid, and he had to write *Mother* from memory.

In 1905, Gorky was in the centre of the preparations for the armed uprising. Thanks to his enormous influence and wide connections he collected thousands of rubles for the revolution.

#### FROM THE ARTICLE:

#### "FRUIT-GROWING EXPERIMENTERS FROM SUDZHA"\*

...We should like to acquaint our readers with some of the fruit-growing experimenters in the Sudzha District of the Kursk Region.

Pyotr Andreyevich Zalomov (of the town of Sudzha, Kursk Region) is sixty years old, an old revolutionary, a Communist, and the organizer of the 1902 First of May demonstration in Sormovo (the prototype of the hero Pavel in Gorky's book *Mother*). After having escaped from exile in Siberia, Comrade Zalomov lived illegally for some years. From 1912,\*\* he took up residence in Sudzha and engaged in fruit-growing in which he set himself the aim of experimenting with existing sorts of fruit plants, in the first place the new Michurin and southern types of apple- and pear-trees, so as to select from the large assorted varieties the best winter types which might thrive and bear fruit in the Kursk Region.

P. A. Zalomov corresponded with I. V. Michurin and received new selected sorts from him. He reproduced these, tested them and distributed the best Michurin varieties among the local population. He gave the young Michurin varieties to amateur horticulturists, accepting only their word that they would spread these sorts.

A group of amateur fruit-growers was organized around Comrade Zalomov who gained a reputation of being a talented leader.

In his own small personal plot of 0.3 hectares, Zalo-

\* From the journal *Fruit- and Vegetable-Growing*, No. 1, January 1937. The author of the article worked in the Orel fruit and berry nursery.

\*\* The author is in error here. P. A. Zalomov took up horticulture approximately at the time when he moved to a house in the Goncharnaya settlement. Zalomov lived in Sudzha from 1907.

mov gathered a finely selected and varied collection of plants from all parts of the country—from Siberia, the Caucasus, the Ukraine, the Crimea, and other places. Among these were the best Michurin varieties, "Bellefleur-Kitaika," which was specially favoured and spread by Zalomov, "Kandil-Kitaika," "Shafran-Kitaika," Bellefleur Krasny" and Michurin pears. The best American sorts are growing and bearing fruit here: "Princess Louise," "Ontario," "Famous," "Bellefleur American," "Winter Banana," "Jonathan," "Wagner Prize" and others. Because of the exceptional care taken of them, some southern sorts of apples and pears are not doing badly, and are giving splendid fruit. These are: "Beredil," "Bon Chretien Williams," "Kandil-Sinap," "Champagne Reinette," "Rosemary White," "Simirenko Reinette" and many others.

Besides these, Comrade Zalomov has Michurin varieties of grapes, hazel-nuts, walnuts, Manchurian nuts, and southern varieties of plums and cherries. Every square inch of his garden is under cultivation. One hundred and sixteen sorts of fruit and berry plants have been collected and tested. Owing to the painstaking attention given to it, the garden bears fruit annually.

Comrade Zalomov also does selective work. Last year new varieties of apple-trees cultivated by Comrade Zalomov gave their first fruit, for example, the "Zalomov Reinette" (we are naming it thus tentatively). This type gives an apple of average size, with a pleasant honeyed taste. The tree is strongly growing and powerful, the leaves round and intensely coloured. Several new types of fertile "Sibirka" are starting to bear fruit; among these is one sort of high quality which has fruit some five to six centimetres in diameter, and has an original and pleasing taste. The study of these new varieties is being organized in the nursery garden.

P. A. Zalomov does a great deal of social work. He has trained a whole group of enthusiastic fruit-growers: M. S. Rybko, N. A. Naidenko, I. A. Redkin, T. N. Samburov, S. N. Samburov and F. Z. Martynovich. All these

experimenters are pupils of Zalomov, who has passed on to them his knowledge and love for fruit cultivation.

But Zalomov is not only an experimenter in fruit-growing; he is an inventor and tireless innovator. He designed and made a fruit-kiln (capable of taking 60 kilogrammes of apples), an apple-cutting machine, a mechanized forge and a garden ladder of a special make.

## FROM P. A. ZALOMOV'S CORRESPONDENCE

### FROM A LETTER TO G. Y. KOZIN

*April 16, 1933 (Sudzha)*

"...My protégé, the collective farm, is growing stronger. I spent a lot of energy on its organization and consolidation, having begun to agitate for collectivization as early as 1926. In 1927, seven of us initiated and established a garden and orchard cooperative, and in 1929, we organized our collective farm which we managed to keep from disintegrating in the spring of 1930. It cost us much intensive labour, but, nevertheless, 300 farmsteads remained in the collective farm, and 330 more joined us before the spring sowing campaign of 1931 began.

"I went from house to house of the individual farmers, and agitated and agitated. Sometimes I sat in a house for two to three hours. I had to visit each one twice or three times, some even five or six times, and there were cases when I had to return eight to ten times. I took some of the new members of the collective farm with me; they themselves started to persuade the individual farmers, having learned how to do it from me, and they were a big help.

"The young Communists were also drawn into collectivization, supporting me to the hilt. Today is the first day of Easter-week, and not one of our 150 horses remained in the stable; they were all out in the fields with the farmers sowing oats. The spring wheat has already been sown.



"We had to interrupt the sowing for three days to cart potatoes on the worst possible roads. The potatoes had to be transported 19 versts through thick mud, with a pair of horses to each cart. The horses had to have a day's rest afterwards, while we used those that were fresh and rested. The potatoes had to be taken from the supply depot to the railway station for dispatch to Northern Caucasus as seed.

"The discipline in the collective farm is strengthening. One hundred and fifty women worked today on the laying of a new road, something which would have been impossible to hope for in 1932. This year we are going to build a shed for a hundred head of cattle, a rabbit-hutch for 100 breeding-rabbits, a workshop, and if our money runs to it, a sheep-fold and a piggery.

"Our budget is a bit tight and as there were no farm buildings to start with, everything had to be put up new. Last year we finished a stable and built a shed for our equipment. This year we are planning to erect an electric power station to be worked by water. It will provide light at night, and power for the workshop during the day.

"There are now very few individual farmers in Goncharovka."

FROM A LETTER TO YELIZAVETA GARINOVA

*February 8, 1939 (Sudzha)*

"Dear Yelizaveta,

"Thanks very much for the information you sent me about the past. Don't be annoyed with me for bothering you, but I should like you to answer another question: When exactly did Grandfather Mikhail come to live with us? What age were you at that time?

"With the help of the letter I have had from you I can fix exactly the times of events in my childhood, on which I am working at the moment.

"I get letters from school children who become interested in me through reading *Mother* and put various questions to me.

"No doubt the children will also find interest in my *Childhood*\* when I finish it and it is off the press.

"I wrote about everything that happened, and when I came to read it over, it was quite clear how I developed, how my character was formed, and I could see that there could not have been any other road for me than the one I took. Life itself pulled me along that road leading to the struggle for a communist society.

"At one time you dreamed that at least one member of the Zalomov family would do something outstanding, be a teacher or a doctor. Part of your dreams has come true. Varvara\*\* is now a teacher. My Galina\*\*\* just missed being a doctor; she would have been one but for the interference of Kolya Chikin, the father of my granddaughter, Yulya.

"Your niece, Lolya Zalomova,\*\*\* has graduated from the Moscow University and now teaches history in a secondary school in Moscow.

"Your niece Galina is receiving 'good' and 'excellent' marks for her studies in the Moscow Industrial Academy where she is training to be an engineer.

"As a child, I was attracted by the heroic exploits of fictional heroes and dreamed of being a hero myself one day. It is true that I never became a hero, but my life, nevertheless, did not pass without value or leaving its mark having served as the prototype of Gorky's Pavel Vlassov.

"One thing is certain, that I also was and remain a *teacher*, and shall be one till I die, as even now I am teaching the youth how to fight better for a communist society. They listen to me and believe me, because by my life, which is now drawing to a close, I showed my devotion to the cause of the world proletariat.

"My happiness is immense because I believe unwaveringly in the victory of communism all over the earth.

\* This concerns the autobiographical story *Pyotr's Childhood*, which Zalomov was writing at the time (the manuscript was not published).

\*\* Varvara Zalomova, Pyotr Zalomov's youngest sister.

\*\*\* Galina and Lolya are Zalomov's daughters.

"In some play or other, Death says to one who is dying: 'Poor fellow, you may rest in peace if you have lived your short life honestly.'

"I have lived my time honestly, but I do not consider myself poor. Quite the reverse, I think of myself as one of the richest and most happy of the human race, and I acquired this happiness only because I recognized and understood the great teachings of Marx and Lenin.

"Maxim Gorky induced me to write about my life starting with childhood. I laughed at the time, thinking it superfluous and absurd, but now I understand that my life might be a lesson for others on how to live, all the more so since I am just a simple man, like millions of others, with this advantage that I grasped the very essence of the principles of Marxism-Leninism. . . .

"I often conjure up thrilling and imposing pictures of the future battles for the world commune; I know that it will be victorious, and the knowledge gives me great comfort.

"You may be proud that you were not just an onlooker, that you helped in the battle, and it is not given to everyone to say this about himself. . . .

"I kiss you warmly. Greetings to Pyotr, Nina and the children, Alexander and Leonid.

*"P. A. Zalomov."*

FROM A LETTER TO G. Y. KOZIN

*August 29, 1940 (Sudzha)*

"...The children have asked me to come and see them in Moscow. I could do the journey both ways free of charge as I have the right to free travel by virtue of my Order of Lenin. I could go in any direction and for any distance, with stops in between if I wished; I could even travel by sea and then change to railway if I liked.

"I am allowed one such journey each year. I have a whole book of tickets, but I have not got what is more important—health, and so far I have not used my free

pass once. All this came to me a bit late in life, when my strength was already exhausted, and I am chained to the one spot—it is an effort even to walk a kilometre to the post-office. When I do get about, it is only on the doctor's orders; I'm told that my heart will give out any time, unless I take care of it.

"My memory is not too good either and this hinders my work on my recollections, which I took up very late and only because Maxim Gorky insisted.

"As you see, I saved some money and bought myself a typewriter,\* but it has not helped my memory and the effort is a great strain; the doctor has forbidden me to do any kind of physical work and advised me to avoid nervous and mental fatigue. Well, what of it? I'll do what I can.

"If I had the chance to sleep for a hundred years and waken when communism had embraced the whole world, I should refuse to take it, because the struggle for communism, to us old underground workers, is more valuable than *a communism which falls like manna from heaven*, obtained without effort on our part. The coming generations will surely envy us for having had the great joy of living in the most intense period of the fight for communist society.

"We know that the greatest happiness lies, not in taking more from life, *but in being able to give more to the achievement of communism*. This is how we old communist underground workers think and feel, and in this we find our greatest bliss, something that death alone can take from us. So, calmly and firmly, we go on to meet the sunset of our lives, knowing that the foundations of communism have been laid, and that there is no power on earth capable of turning back the toiling people of our planet.

"Only he may find the full measure of happiness in the present who did not spare strength nor life itself to bring it about. And you and I may say that with courage

\* The letter was typed.

and honesty we trod the path from capitalism to socialism and communism, whose outlines are being shaped at the present time. . . .

"I kiss you warmly.

*"P. A. Zalomov."*

FROM A LETTER TO G. Y. KOZIN

*May 5, 1941 (Sudzha)*

"...Our feelings are mutual. Like you, I never tire of finding joy in our victory, the struggle for which you and I joined in our early youth. With complete justification we may say that our cause, the cause of the workers and toiling peasants, has prevailed, and nowhere in the world is there a force able to halt the onward march to communism.

"There was much that was hard and painful in what I had to go through for socialism and communism, but there is nothing in my life that I would wish not to have happened, not even the beatings and tortures, because they made me morally strong, although they undermined my health.

"Now I look calmly at approaching death. My conscience is clear. I did all that lay in my power for the success of communism, and I can die peacefully, without any qualms of conscience.

"I look upon my whole life as a great happiness, because at no time did I give way or bow the knee before anyone or anything, and the meaning of my life was and is the struggle for communism.

"The Regional Department of Social Insurance offered to send me to a health resort, but I have not accepted it as travelling is difficult for me. Well, does it make any real difference whether one lives a little more or a little less, when the victory of communism is solidly assured?

"The weather is now warm here; the buds are spreading on the apple- and pear-trees, promising a good harvest. I receive my pension regularly. What else do I need? Isn't Sudzha as good a health resort as Pyati-

gorsk? Only the unbearable heat is absent here, and this is kinder to my weak heart.

"I kiss you warmly. Keep well.

*"P. A. Zalomov."*

**LETTER FROM STUDENTS OF THE B.-SOLDATCHENSKAYA  
SCHOOL FOR PEASANT YOUTH TO P. A. ZALOMOV**

"Dear Comrade Zalomov,

"We students have been working on Maxim Gorky's book *Mother*, and learned that you are the hero of the book and that your mother is the heroine. You are represented in the book in the person of Pavel Vlassov.

"We heard that you are still alive and staying not far from us, and, therefore, we decided to write you a letter to express our opinion of you as a political worker and revolutionary, and besides to learn more about your life and activity after your exile in Siberia, where you were sent after the famous speech at the trial.

"We should like very much to know how and when you returned from the far, cold Siberia. Did you escape, or perhaps you were liberated only by the Red October?

"Your mother, as a woman revolutionary, made an unusual impression on us. But the author does not say what happened to the woman who distributed leaflets calling on the workers to struggle and to carry the truth to the people.

"The author stopped at the point where she was seized by the spies; the police had set upon her and began to beat her, but he does not tell us if she remained alive after this, or if she had been beaten to death by these wretched people who were serving the tsarist government as a chained dog serves its master. We are very anxious to know whether you met her afterwards, or did you never see her again? It would help us very much if you answered these questions.

"Dear Comrade! We of the younger generation who are now studying the Russian revolutionary movement are often shocked to read of the terrible conditions in which

you were forced to live and fight for a better future and the socialist society whose basis is now built.

"After reading your life-story we came to know you as an honest, straightforward, staunch and brave worker-revolutionary, the first to raise the red banner of the working people in the black years of reaction. Such people as you prepared the Red October. You came through the difficult period of struggle between 1905 and 1917.

"Now the struggle is different. We fight the class enemy; we fight against the darkness, backwardness and lack of culture in our villages; we fight for a quicker growth of production, for quality; we fight to fulfil the five-year plan; we fight for the building of socialism in our country.

"We youth owe you, and all such as you, thanks for preparing new conditions of life for us and for creating the Red October, which will now bring the victory of communism.

"Dear Comrade, we earnestly request you to answer our questions, if it is not too painful for you to remember."

*(Signed by thirty students.)*

**FROM P. A. ZALOMOV'S LETTER IN REPLY  
TO THE B.-SOLDATCHENSKAYA STUDENTS**

"Dear Comrades,

"Your letter, full of hatred for the class enemy, the oppressors of the working class and toiling peasants, and imbued with revolutionary spirit and heroic readiness to fight to the end for the cause of October, gave me great happiness.

"First of all, I shall answer your questions. Gorky's work is not a simple narration of the lives of my mother and myself. Gorky used both our lives as a canvas for his artistic labour. Our real lives were more rigorous and less colourful and remarkable.

"We old Bolsheviks were the bitter enemies of the autocracy and the capitalist system. Our hatred for them reached its utmost limit, and nothing could temper it or

blunt it. Our struggle against them, therefore, remained irreconcilable.

"Naturally, I could not stay in Eastern Siberia till the October Revolution, nor be content with exile for life and the loss of all property rights. I made my own way to freedom. I took upon myself the right to continue the fight against the autocracy, and I escaped from exile, leaving behind me my wife and three-month-old daughter, who is now a Communist and employed in the Nizhny Novgorod auto works, and, like yourselves, fighting for the cause of the Red October.

"I escaped at the beginning of March 1905 and joined my comrades the Bolsheviks in Petersburg. I worked in a number of factories there and helped to organize the workers; then I went to Moscow where I was put in charge of armed workers' detachments in Zamoskvorechye District, and later commissioned to make bomb-casings. I took part in the barricade fighting in Krasnaya Presnya District.

"Following the defeat of the armed uprising I was given the command of armed workers' detachments in Krasnaya Presnya and Rogozhsko-Simonovsky districts. I remained on this work, living under an assumed name, until the middle of 1906.

"Imprisonment, hunger-strikes, savage beatings and scurvy, as well as the continuously intensive revolutionary work, undermined my health; I was coughing up blood and was compelled to give up revolutionary work. I registered with the authorities under my own name in November 1906, on the basis of the Manifesto of October 17, 1905, and came to Sudzha where my wife had received a teaching appointment in the local Gymnasium.

"The sentence depriving me of all property rights was substituted by an order taking away all special rights and privileges. I was forbidden to travel from Sudzha, debarred from working, engaging in trade, etc. Spies and gendarmes followed me everywhere. As a result, my work could not be as fruitful as I would have wished it to be.



"After the February revolution, the workers elected me to the Sudzha temporary Revolutionary Executive Committee. There I threw out the landowners and kulaks from the Executive Committee and put peasants in their places. Following the October Revolution, I placed a draft proposal on the organization of the 'Sudzha District Council of People's Commissars' before the Sudzha Revolutionary Council. My proposal was accepted and at the District Congress of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, I was appointed Commissar of Labour.

"When the Soviet troops evacuated Sudzha, retreating to Gotnya Station, I stayed behind in Sudzha. The Whiteguards, headed by the officer Shkodnin, wanted to hang me and sent a telegram to this effect to the town of Rylsk. However, they did not get their way. Before the German troops arrived, I left Sudzha and came back again in September. But I was denounced, seized by the Ukrainian nationalist soldiers and beaten. The union of grain merchants, composed of landowners and kulaks, sentenced me to be shot. However, the revolution broke out in Germany and the German troops had to be withdrawn; the sentence was not carried out and I was released from prison.

"Denikin's men court-martialled me as the organizer of Soviet power in the Sudzha District and were going to hang me, but our Red Army caught up with the Whites so fast that they forgot about the imprisoned commissars and had time only to save their own skins. I was alive, but Denikin's men had not spared me; I got out of their clutches a complete invalid.

"Nevertheless, I put what strength I have left to good purpose. I was elected to the Presidium of the District Control Commission of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and then became a member of the board of the Goncharovka Red October Collective Farm. I am fighting now for the organizational and economic consolidation of the farm, for 100 per cent fulfilment of the grain deliveries, and am ready to lay down my life, if need be, for each extra centner of the grain so

badly needed by the government for the building of socialism.

"My mother is alive; she is now 82 years old and lives in the Red Etna factory settlement in Nizhny Novgorod. She is now an atheist, and like you, she fights for the cause of the Red October. It was she who helped us in our revolutionary activity, carried the leaflets from Nizhny Novgorod to Ivanovo-Voznesensk when a strike was taking place there and brought the red banners into Sormovo before the demonstration of 1902.

"When she was taking the leaflets to Ivanovo-Voznesensk, she deliberately selected a seat in the train alongside a gendarme and conversed with him the whole way; again, when bringing the May Day leaflets into Sormovo before the 1902 demonstration, she looked through the compartments till she found a gendarme, sat down beside him, humbugged him and got away without being searched.

"In 1905, she came to stay with me in Moscow, showing no fear of living with the organizer of the armed workers' detachments with death hanging over him; nor was she worried about her own life being in danger as an accomplice. She arranged our family life in a way that raised no suspicion from anyone.

"Almost every year she visits me for a month or six weeks. On these visits she likes to recall the past, laughing when she remembers how she fooled the gendarmes and crying when she recalls how I had been near to death during the hunger-strike, when I had refused both food and drink. She had run to the prison hospital where the doctor told her that if they had brought me half an hour later than they did, they could not have saved my life.

"She is still in good spirits and, indeed, her health is better than mine.

"Now that I have answered your questions, dear comrades, I want to say a few more words to you. There are millions like me, but we were all worthless and pitiful slaves before we became acquainted with the teachings of the great leaders of the proletariat—Marx, Engels and

Lenin. It was their doctrines alone which steeled our muscles and transformed us into irreconcilable fighters for the general line of the Party. They are dead now, but their cause is alive.

"You and I, comrades, must do more to increase the tempo of socialist construction, and for this it is necessary that the toiling peasantry as a whole consciously take up the task of quickening the rate of growth of our economy, and then we shall go forward with giant strides to socialism.

"I have replied to your questions. Now I ask you what have you done and what are you doing for socialist construction and the speedier success of the cause of the Red October? You can reply to me through the newspaper, *The Collective Farm*.

"I send you warm communist greetings, dear comrades.

*"P. Zalomov."*

FROM A LETTER SENT BY P. A. ZALOMOV TO CLASS 7-B OF SCHOOL  
NO. 382 IN THE SOKOLNIKI DISTRICT OF MOSCOW

*February 27, 1931*

"My dear young friends,

"There is nothing in the whole world greater and more splendid than the lofty ideas of Marxism-Leninism. For the first generation of Bolshevik workers, the fight for the victory of these ideas was and remains the greatest happiness, the noblest meaning of life.

"Yes, the workers' life under tsarism was terribly oppressive. We were just appendages to the machines, coining money for the capitalists; more exactly, we were the machines. During my father's lifetime, I was fed on simple, rough food and did not know hunger. After his death our family were in a constant state of starvation, and I know what it is to have to eat mouldy crusts from kitchen refuse, which even the pigs won't eat. My health suffered from the lack of adequate and nourishing food and I contracted almost all childhood diseases.

"Like everyone else, you confuse Pavel Vlassov with Pyotr Zalomov, but Pyotr Zalomov was only the prototype for Pavel Vlassov. In 1905, Gorky made notes from the conversation I had with him, but these were confiscated in a police raid; he wrote *Mother* from memory and by the application of his great artistic talent.

"I became a worker when I was fifteen years old, and my life was cheerless, unhappy and senseless. I thought often of committing suicide, and only the thought of *Mother* kept me among the living slaves of capitalism.

"Only by the force of sharp contrasts does one understand the happiness of life, and I knew that happiness only when I had read and accepted with all my heart and soul *The Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, grasped the beauty and grandeur of communist society and understood the greatness of the struggle for this new society.

"It was only when I had mastered *The Communist Manifesto* that the scales fell from my eyes; I was born anew, a real man, and my life became radiantly bright. There is no greater happiness in the world than to fight for a communist society, and there is no more beautiful death than to die for the world commune.

"As an old Bolshevik worker, I shall talk to you frankly, since I cannot speak any other way. As future fighters for the world commune, you are very near and dear to me, but your letter made a very bad impression on me.

"The Roman mob applauded the gladiator who had come unscathed from the gory battle; you are ready to applaud Pavel Vlassov, hero of Gorky's story *Mother*.

"And you yourselves, who are you? Fighters for the world commune or slaves born blind?

"You tell me that you have been given every chance to study, and at the same time you say that there are *some* (!!!) 'good' pupils in your class.

"And so the mountain gave birth to a mouse!

"Where are your 'excellent' pupils? Where is your striving for 'good' and 'excellent' in your studies?...

"Science is a vertically placed ladder, every step of which may be reached only by the complete exertion of all one's strength, and is not something to play with as an infant plays with the bubbles of its mouth.

"You must, you are obliged, to study and master your subjects firmly and fully without interruptions or breaks.

"To get 'good' and 'excellent' for your school work is not a child's game, but an important achievement for the building of communist society in the U.S.S.R., for the victory of the world commune.

"Great work awaits you, and the more you master science, the more fruitful will be the results of your work, the more you will feel the enormous pleasure which your work can give.

"I send you my communist greetings.

"Your grandfather,

[1938]

"P. A. Zalomov."

#### FATHERLY ADVICE TO THE YOUNG\*

My dear young friends!

You are the third generation of Sormovo workers. By age you are my grandchildren. Listen to what I have to say to you.

Sormovian—that's a proud word. To be called a Sormovian is a great honour. This means that one belongs to the oldest and most advanced section of the Russian working class.

Do you youngsters know how your elders organized strikes and marched in revolutionary demonstrations? Just outside the works, where the school is standing now, the workers fought on the barricades in 1905. In these

\* A record of a talk by P. A. Zalomov with young workers in one of the shops of the Red Sormovo works at the end of October, 1942, arranged on the invitation of the Y.C.L. works committee. It was published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, No. 258, Nov. 1, 1942.

shops where you are working now, the first Russian tanks were produced during the Civil War on Lenin's instructions. On the armour-plating of the first tanks the workers wrote: "Comrade Lenin, Fighter for the Revolution." The tugs lying in the creek were covered over with armour-plating and supplied with machine-guns; they were made for the Volga flotilla.\*

It was from here, from Sormovo, that the Red Guards left for Moscow in 1917, to fight the military cadets; it was from here that the workers' regiments went to all the fronts of the Civil War. The glory of Red Sormovo spread throughout the whole of Russia. Lenin kept his eyes constantly on Sormovo and guided us in our struggle.

You youngsters should be proud that you are the children of real revolutionaries, that the blood of the former Sormovians runs in your veins. Remember this always and be worthy of your fathers.

The Russian worker has always been noted for love of his motherland, loyalty to his class, fraternal solidarity, the ability to overcome any kind of obstacles, and will for victory. Cherish these qualities and develop them.

My generation had to face many difficulties. All Russia groaned under the heel of the tsar; we could not breathe freely. The police watched our every step, while spies in the streets poked their noses into everything, sniffing out "sedition." It was impossible to speak one's mind.

In the factories, the workers threw away their lives for kopeks. There was no other way out than to die of hunger.

Life was heavy for the workers in that cursed tsarist time. Starvation and cold haunted the squalid houses along Bolshaya and Malaya Kanavas, Myshyakovka and Varikha.\*\*

\* The Volga armed flotilla, which was in action on the rivers Kama, Belaya and Volga against the Whites, was created in 1918-19, mainly from large tugboats.

\*\* Bolshaya and Malaya Kanavas mentioned by Zalomov are streets in Sormovo now called Old and New Kanavas. Myshyakovka and Varikha are villages that now adjoin Sormovo.

It wasn't accidental that we sang the song:

*All the road to Sormovo  
Is flooded with our tears.*

The workers' settlement of Sormovo was literally as Maxim Gorky described it:

"Every day the factory whistle shrieked tremulously in the grimy, greasy air above the workers' settlement. And in obedience to its summons sullen people, roused before sleep had refreshed their muscles, came scuttling out of their little grey houses like frightened cockroaches.... The mud smacked beneath their feet. They shouted in hoarse sleepy voices and rent the air with ugly oaths.... In the evening ... the factory expelled the people from its stone bowels as though they were so much slag, and they climbed the street again—grimy, black-faced, their hungry teeth glittering, their bodies giving off the sticky odour of machine oil."

I remember my childhood. We were a large family, eight children. Our old grandfather was looked on as an encumbrance. My father earned about fifty rubles a month. We were in dire poverty. When Mother had boiled the pot of thin gruel, we sat at the table and ate it hungrily, while she wept as she watched us, knowing that we were still famished.

When Mother was out we were left alone. We walked the streets clad only in shirts, with our feet bare. When we came home again, we begged our oldest sister for a piece of bread. She said to us, "Mother is out, there's no bread, and there's no money either."

I was seven years old when my father died of gas-poisoning at the age of 39. He had worked in the factory for twenty-five years.

When I was fifteen I got work as a fitter's apprentice. I had to rise at four in the morning and didn't get home till very late in the evening. I longed for sleep the whole day through. When the meal-break came, I sat down on a candle-box near which I worked at the vices, let my head fall to my knees, and fell fast asleep immediately. My

muscles ached from work beyond my strength; my hands always seemed to be a mass of blisters. They bled quite often when the hammer miscarried as I was chipping screws. But no one went to the works first-aid post with such an injury. I smothered the bleeding spots with crumpled chalk, wound a dirty, greasy rag round them and kept on working.

The general atmosphere in the factory was extremely depressing. The worker was insulted at every turn, with the foreman throwing the whole book of curses at him. The apprentices were often knocked about—and not only the apprentices. There was one time when a foreman laid a stick over a moulder's back, and another occasion when a grey-haired old man was made to stand at attention with a stick in place of a rifle. We apprentices were sometimes made to kneel before the foreman, who would say:

"I have been put here by God."

There were frequent cases of workers being crippled, or killed, as my father was. In my time, two journeymen were hit by flying pieces of hot metal and lost their sight. The mechanic used to make us keep the belt moving on the pulley by hand.

The work used up all our energy. At seventeen, I was incapable of moving quickly; I suffered from shortness of breath and couldn't dance. My legs became crooked, my spine sagged, and my chest hollowed in.

Such a life could not be taken lying down. At fifteen years of age I began to take part in the revolutionary movement. Since then, my comrades and I have held firmly to our chosen aims and have never been diverted from them.

There were those who did not believe we would be successful.

"For God's sake," they said, "do you really think you can get the better of them? After all, the tsar has the army, the gendarmes and the police. The capitalists and the landowners have grabbed everything by force, and they have any number of people to serve them. How can you fight the tsar? He's been ruling for three hundred years."



Not everyone thought that way. More workers joined the revolutionary movement every year. Our first May Day meeting was held in Sluda, four kilometres from Nizhny Novgorod. In the following year, May Day was celebrated on the Mokhoviye hills, and many more people attended it. Then, for the third May Day we went over the Volga, opposite Sormovo. May Day gatherings of the Sormovo workers became an annual event. In 1899, it was accompanied by a strike. On the First of May, 1902, there was a mass revolutionary demonstration. More than five thousand people assembled in Glavnaya street; we sang revolutionary songs and shouted for all to hear, "Down with the Tsar!" I was at the front with a large red banner, across which was written: "Down with the Autocracy!" Behind me came the brothers Baranov with two more banners.

We marched in the direction of Darinsky Passage singing the "Varshavyanka." Suddenly we heard the sound of drums, and then a company of soldiers came out of a lane. We continued marching, the unarmed against the armed. The commanding officer shouted, "At the ready!" Still we moved forward; not a comrade left the ranks.

On we went to a pool of water flooding the street, where the soldiers with fixed bayonets came running at us. Someone else pulled my banner down, but I raised it aloft and, shouting, "I'm not a coward," strode through the water right up to the bayonets. The soldiers stopped, though no one had given the order. Not one of the bayonets so much as touched me. The soldiers turned them upwards. I heard the officer roaring something.

Then prison, beatings and torture. Next, the trial and exile for life; after that Siberia, from where I escaped.

The Sormovo workers were always in the vanguard of the working class. In December 1905, they threw up barricades in all parts of Sormovo. Having made their own guns, they faced the tsarist troops boldly. The fighting lasted for several days with much bloodshed; the Sormovo workers defended the barricades to the last.

The defeat of the uprising did not end the resistance of the Sormovo workers; they continued the fight by organizing strikes and political demonstrations.

And in October 1917, when the news reached Sormovo that the Socialist Revolution had broken out in Petrograd, they rose as one man and set up Soviet power in Sormovo, Kanavino and in Nizhny Novgorod and the whole of that province. They fought the Whiteguards, suppressed the revolts of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the kulaks, and assisted the Muscovites to establish Soviet power in the capital.

Our native Sormovo was practically deserted during those years, as the workers were at the various fronts, fighting Kolchak and Denikin, defending Tsaritsyn and Petrograd, and taking part in the capture of Perekop and in the battles for Kakhovka. "The Gallant Sixth Company of the Sormovo Y.C.L." particularly distinguished itself in those battles for the motherland.

Those workers who remained in Sormovo toiled day and night to produce arms for the young Red Army. Sormovo was then cold and hungry. There was no heat in the houses, and the wind whistled through the workshops. There was nothing to eat but the ration of two ounces of bread a day; new boots were a thing of the past; the workers walked with the toes sticking out of their boots.

The enemy drew nearer to Sormovo; the Whites captured Kazan; their warships sailed up and down the Volga. Things became really serious. But did anyone lose heart? Did the workers stop working? Did they lose hope of victory? No! They clenched their teeth and tightened their belts. They worked frantically for the front. And they won victory in the end.

The Bolshevik Party had always taught the workers to have faith in their own strength. Would we have won without this belief in ourselves, if we had not strained every nerve, and had not used every possibility before us? Of course not. The power of the working class lies in its ability to overcome difficulties.

We won happiness for you. You have known the golden time of childhood and have never known want. Our motherland has shown you every care and given you an education. Everything good we have is yours: parks, clubs and schools.

Sormovo is now a different place. Instead of the old hovels, there are new many-storey houses. Where we used to see the old taverns, there are now parks and gardens, wonderful schools, theatres and clubs. They're your property.

Our comrades are now fighting the German invaders to protect these achievements. The Sormovians are now battling in Stalingrad, around Voronezh, and near Mzodok. The workers' blood is flowing again. With the Sormovians it is war to the death against the fascist invader.

The fascists want to make slaves of us again. Never! The Germans want to put the Gestapo on our streets. We've had enough of that; we've had more than our fill of gendarmes.

I saw much that was terrible in the days of the tsar. I was beaten in prison, tortured and exiled to Siberia, and sentenced to death three times. But life under Hitler would be more terrible. There are no fiendish tortures ever thought up by man which they would not apply to the Soviet people. Remember that always. Let your young hearts be filled with hatred for the damnable fascist invaders. Let your hatred for them give you new strength, so that your hands will never get tired in working for the front.

Now, when your fathers and brothers are at the front, your responsibility has grown immensely. You are now the masters of production and are responsible for your own factory.

As an old Sormovo worker, I shall give you some fatherly advice. Guard sacredly the revolutionary traditions of the Russian working class. Be worthy successors to the cause of the older comrades. Work in the same selfless way your fathers did during the Civil War, bear

your hardship unflinchingly and surmount every difficulty with courage.

Work in the Stakhanov way; be masters of your trades. The worker is devoted to his trade, proud of his profession.

Don't lag behind your comrades. If you do less than your mate today, you ought to feel ashamed. Are you not as good as he is? Prove it to him and tomorrow leave him behind.

It used to be said of the skilled worker of old: "He's a jack of all trades." You too should have the knack of working and be able to take on any job in your shops.

Be industrious; value every minute in production; avoid slovenliness; take care of your tools—they are your weapons. Work for the glory of it; fulfil all your tasks. The worker is valued for his skill and not for his beautiful eyes.

If things are not going well with you, don't give up. Remember the saying: "Dogged does as dogged does it."

Help your mate. If you see him doing something not quite right, help him straightaway, advise him, show him in practice, share your experience with him. If you finish your job before him, give him a hand. Next time he will come to your aid. Helping one's fellow-man is a noble thing to do. The strength of the working class is in its solidarity.

My young friends, listen to your elders. Respect your older comrades, watch carefully how the old hands do their work, listen to what they have to say about their experiences.

This is the advice of an old Russian worker.

Remember that we are waging a stern war. It won't spare the weak; it won't forgive mistakes. One can't stand still during a war. If you don't shoot first, the enemy will. That is something that concerns you too. By your work for the front you are helping to bring victory. If you do not fulfil your norms, the factory cannot give the front all it needs. Without screws a gun cannot fire and a plane cannot fly.

My friends! The motherland has placed you at the work-benches, and that is also a fighting line. Every exact blow of the hammer hits the enemy where he feels it most. The more parts you make during your shift, the harder our army hits the fascists that day. Work in such a way that on the 25th anniversary of the October Revolution, the men at the front will say: "Thanks!"

And we old workers and Bolsheviks will say:

"Here are the worthy inheritors of our revolutionary traditions! Our sons and daughters, we are proud of you!"

# СЕМЬЯ ЗАЛОМОВЫХ

*На английском языке*











